

## FRONTIERS CAMP 2024 HEALTH ADVISORY

(Revised January 2024)

*The following health advisory follows guidelines detailed in current BSA literature and needs to be reviewed by the parent/guardian prior to registering for Frontiers Camp.*

Frontiers Camp is a highly active and routinely vigorous activity. As a result, Frontiers Camp has adopted the same health guidelines that BSA high adventure bases have implemented. As Frontiers Camp operates with staff leadership (with only a few cases of home troop leadership present) as much information about the health issues and special needs of Frontiers Camp participants is requested in advance of camp.

In an attempt to better plan for the medical needs of our campers, please inform us at the time of electronic registration of any allergies (especially food) or medical needs of the camper. Knowledge of this information prior to camp will allow us to review our program and initiate a dialogue with the parent/guardian in advance of the camper's arrival at camp.

Please contact the Camp Director at [frontierscampvt@gmail.com](mailto:frontierscampvt@gmail.com) if you have any questions or wish to discuss any health issues prior to registering.

**Parent, Staff and Camper Advisory** - In order to provide better care for its members and to assist them in better understanding their own physical capabilities, the Boy Scouts of America requires that everyone who participates in a Scouting resident camp have an annual medical evaluation by a certified and licensed health-care provider—a physician (MD or DO), nurse practitioner, or physician assistant. Providing your medical information through the Annual Health and Medical Record will help ensure you meet the minimum standards for participation in Frontiers Camp activities. **Please ensure you have completed Parts A, B, and C of the 2019 version of the medical form.**

This Medical Form must be complete (with proper signatures by the health care provider) and submitted to camp health officers when arriving at Frontiers Camp on Saturday June 25, 2022. **Medical forms cannot be emailed.** No parent, staff, or camper is allowed to remain in camp without a complete medical form on file. **In order to be compliant with the mandatory annual checkup, please ensure the form is dated sometime after June 30, 2023 but before June 22, 2024.**

Frontiers Camp has an excellent health and safety record and strives to minimize risks to participants and staff by emphasizing appropriate safety precautions and procedures. Because most participants are prepared, are conscious of risks, and take safety precautions, they do not experience injuries. If you decide to attend Frontiers Camp as a camper or staff member, you should be physically fit, have proper clothing and equipment, be willing to follow instructions, work as a team member, and take responsibility for your own health and safety.

Parents, guardians, and participants in any Scouting program are advised that journeying to and from these bases can involve exposure to accidents, illness, and/or injury. Frontiers Camp staff members have been trained in first aid, CPR, and accident prevention and are prepared to assist as needed. Medical and search-and-rescue services will be provided in response to an accident or emergency as appropriate. **However, response times can be affected by location, terrain, weather, or other emergencies and could be delayed for several hours.** Knowledgeable staff will instruct all participants in safety measures to be followed. Participants must be prepared to listen to and carefully follow these safety measures and to accept responsibility for the health and safety of themselves and others.

**Weather and Equipment** - Climatic conditions for late June in north central Vermont are of moderate temperature with an average maximum temperature of 72° F and average minimum average temperature of 53° F. However, extremes of 87° and 39° have been noted. The average precipitation for June is 4+/-" and anecdotally we have observed rain to occur at some point in each day during the period of camp in some years. And, the wind has been strong enough to blow down tents and tarps. The equipment list provided in other Frontiers Camp literature should be considered the minimum "kit" to bring to camp. Especially please note the "poncho" or rain coat item.

**Food** - Frontiers Camp offers food appropriate for the experience. If a participant has special dietary needs, they should be communicated to the Camp Director prior to arriving at camp. When dietary needs are known prior to camp, Frontiers Camp will try to meet those needs. However, given the structure of the camp and our method of food preparation, we may not be able to meet every need. Therefore, pre-camp communication is essential.

**Medications** - Each participant with a medical condition requiring medication should bring an appropriate supply for the duration of Frontiers Camp. The medication container should be the original container and have the pharmacy label on it. Consider bringing duplicate supplies of vital medications. People with allergies that have resulted in severe reactions or anaphylaxis must bring with them an EpiPen that has not expired.

**Immunizations** - Each participant should have received a tetanus immunization within the last 10 years. Recognition will be given to the rights of those Scouts and Scouters who do not have immunizations because of medical or religious beliefs. In such a situation, the *Immunization Exemption Request form (from BSA National Council)* is required. Please note the State of Vermont only permits exemptions from any/all immunizations for medical or religious circumstances.

**Recommendations Regarding Chronic Illnesses** - There are no facilities for extended care or treatment at Frontiers Camp; therefore participants who cannot meet the following requirements cannot be accepted into camp. As noted in the in the Frontiers Camp Details and Information web page there are no refunds after the date specified for the camp year.

***The Camp Health Officer reserves the right to deny the participation of any individual on the basis of a physical examination and/or medical history.***

**Medical Risk Factors for Your Participation at Frontiers Camp:** (These details can also be found at <https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/risk-factors/>)

Scouting can be physically and mentally demanding. Environmental, emotional, or physical demands may push the limits of one's ability to deal with problems. This can result in worsening of preexisting medical or mental health conditions. To help its members Be Prepared, the Boy Scouts of America recommends that everyone who participates in a Scouting activity have an annual medical evaluation by a certified and licensed health-care provider: a physician (MD or DO), nurse practitioner, or physician assistant. If you are on medications, these should be continued while you are at Scouting events. Be certain that the event leader knows about all of your current medications. Based on the vast experience of the medical community, the BSA has identified risk factors that could become issues during weekend camping, hikes, treks, tours, or other activities. If you have any of the risk factors on this list, it means that you may have an increased chance of having problems while at a Scouting event. Therefore, someone else, preferably the event leader, should know about your risk status. Completing the Annual Health and Medical Record (AHMR), having a discussion with your health-care provider regarding the types of activities you will be participating in, and sharing your current health information with adult leaders who will be joining you on these activities will help to keep you and everyone healthy and safe.

Become familiar with the following risk factors to ensure all Scouts and Scouters are prepared.

### **Excessive Body Weight (Obesity)**

Excessive body weight increases the risk for numerous health problems. To ensure the best experience, Scouts and Scouters should be of proportional height and weight. One such measure is the Body Mass Index (BMI), which can be calculated using a tool from the Centers for Disease Control (Reference 1).

Calculators for both adults and youth are available. Adults with a BMI of 30 or greater should consult with their health-care provider prior to participation in Scouting events. It is recommended that youth fall within the fifth and 85th percentiles. Those in the 85th percentile or above are at risk and should work to achieve a higher level of fitness.

### **Cardiac or Cardiovascular Disease**

These include

- Angina (chest pain caused by blocked blood vessels or supplying the heart)
- Myocardial infarction (heart attack)
- Heart surgery or heart catheterization (including angioplasty to treat blocked blood vessels, balloon dilation, or stents)
- Stroke or transient ischemic attacks (TIAs)
- Claudication (leg pain with exercise, caused by hardening of the arteries)
- Family history of heart disease or a family member who died unexpectedly before age 50
- Heart failure
- Smoking

Youth who have congenital heart disease or acquired heart disease such as rheumatic fever, Kawasaki's disease, or mitral valve prolapse should undergo a thorough exam.

### **Hypertension (High Blood Pressure)**

Scouts and Scouters should have a blood pressure lower than 130/85. Persons with significant hypertension (>140/90) should be under treatment, which often requires medication, and their condition should be under control. If participating in a Scouting event that is physically demanding, it is recommended that hypertension be under control in the six months prior to the date of the event. The goal of the treatment should be to lower blood pressure to normal levels (Reference 2). Those already on antihypertensive therapy with normal blood pressures should continue treatment and should not choose the time they are at any Scouting event to experiment with or change medications.

### **Diabetes**

Any individual with insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus should be able to self-monitor blood glucose and know how to adjust insulin dose based on activity, meals, or other factors — or be accompanied by a guardian that is knowledgeable in these matters. The individual with diabetes and/or the guardian should also know how to administer a self-injection/injection and recognize signs of high and low blood sugar. If planning on participating in an overnight experience of any kind, bring enough medication, testing supplies, and equipment for the entire Scouting event. This includes batteries for pumps or blood glucose monitors (without the need for recharging) to be both brought to and taken away from the event (remember Leave No Trace guidelines). With change in exertion levels and diet while camping, hiking, or involvement in other strenuous activities, glucose levels may need to be checked more frequently.

An insulin-dependent individual who desires to participate in a physically demanding Scouting event should reconsider participation if they have been newly diagnosed (within six months of the fitness examination) or undergone a change in their insulin delivery system (e.g., an insulin pump) in the same period. This also applies to an individual who has been hospitalized for treatment of diabetes or has had problems with low blood sugar in the last year.

All individuals with diabetes, including non-insulin-dependent diabetics, may be susceptible to foot problems because of poor circulation and/or nerve problems causing decreased sensation in the feet. When camping, it is particularly important that well-fitting boots or shoes be worn; socks be clean and changed daily; and feet be examined at least daily — if not more often — for blisters, sores, bruises, and foreign bodies such as thorns (Reference 3, 4).

### **Seizures (Epilepsy)**

Seizure disorder or epilepsy should be well-controlled by medications if an individual desires to participate in a physically demanding Scouting event. A minimum of six seizure-free months prior to the fitness examination is considered under control. Participants with a history of seizures need to limit high-adventure activities (e.g., climbing, rappelling, and scuba diving).

## **Asthma**

Acute or severe bronchial asthma under treatment anytime during the past 24 months should be well-controlled before participating in physically demanding Scouting events. Key indicators of well-controlled are:

- The use of a rescue inhaler no more than twice a week.
- No need for nighttime treatment with a rescue inhaler.

Well-controlled asthma may include the use of long-acting bronchodilators, inhaled steroids, or oral medications such as Singulair. If the Scouting event is physically demanding, individuals with the following asthma conditions should reconsider participation:

- Exercise asthma is not controlled by medication.
- Participant has been hospitalized, or has gone to the emergency room, for asthma treatment in the six months prior to the Scouting activity.
- Participant has received treatment that required oral steroids (prednisone) in the six months before the Scouting activity.

When participating in any overnight Scouting event, participants must bring an adequate supply of medications, along with a backup supply and spare rescue inhalers. Ensure all medications and inhalers are not expired. Participants must carry a rescue inhaler at all times during any Scouting event.

## **Sleep Apnea**

Scouts and Scouters with sleeping disorders may experience health risks due to long days and short nights for many Scouting events. Individuals with sleep apnea should consult with their health-care provider about the use of their CPAP equipment at a Scouting event. For individuals with sleep apnea, it is suggested that all equipment (e.g., CPAP machine) be brought by the Scout or Scouter for overnight Scouting events. This may include batteries (with or without the need for recharging) to be both brought to and taken away from the Scouting event (remember Leave No Trace guidelines).

## **Allergies or Anaphylaxis**

Scouting events may present several risks (e.g., nuts, pollens, wasps, hornets, and other stinging insects) that could trigger anaphylactic reactions in individuals prone to these reactions. It is recommended that Scouts and Scouters who have had an anaphylactic reaction from any cause contact the appropriate medical personnel of the Scouting event to confirm participation eligibility before arrival, especially if the event includes an overnight experience. Participants will be required to have appropriate treatment (e.g., an EpiPen) with them at all times.

For longer Scouting events such as summer camp, jamborees, and high-adventure programs, allergy shots required for maintenance doses may be acceptable for persons who have not had an anaphylactic reaction. Contact the appropriate medical personnel for the event for confirmation.

## **Ingrown Toenails, Recent Musculoskeletal Injuries, and Orthopedic Surgery**

Many Scouting events put a great deal of strain on feet, ankles, and knees. If the Scouting event is physically demanding, ingrown toenails should be treated at least a month prior to the event. Scouts and Scouters who have had orthopedic surgery, including arthroscopic surgery, or significant musculoskeletal injuries, including back problems, should have a release from the surgeon or treating physician to participate in Scouting events.

## **Psychiatric/Psychological and Emotional Difficulties**

Psychiatric/psychological and emotional disorders do not necessarily exclude an individual from Scouting events. Parents and advisers should be aware that most Scouting events are not designed to assist in overcoming psychological or emotional problems. Experience demonstrates that these problems frequently are magnified, not lessened, when participants are subjected to the physical and mental challenges of many Scouting activities.

Any condition must be well-controlled without the services of a mental health practitioner. Under no circumstances should a participant choose to stop their medication on their own for any of these issues before or during a Scouting activity. If the Scouting event is an overnight experience, Scouts and Scouters are required to bring an appropriate supply of medication for the duration of the event, including travel to and from the event.

## **Immunodeficiency**

Immune deficiency, also known as immune compromise, is when the body's immune system is unable to normally fight infections. Immune deficiency can exist due to some diseases such as HIV or cancer, certain genetic diseases, or malnutrition. It can also be a side effect of steroid medication or medications given for cancer, autoimmune disease, or after-organ transplantation. Camping, particularly wilderness and/or long-term camping, may expose the individual to increased infection risks. The individual should discuss with their health-care provider as to whether their level of immune deficiency requires special precautions or if they should avoid the planned activity altogether (Reference 5).

## **Other Risk Factors**

Sickle-cell anemia, hemophilia, leukemia, severe blood problems, and HIV infection — as well as the need for blood thinners (e.g., coumadin, Eliquis, Xarelto, or Plavix) — provide special challenges to Scouts and Scouters. To plan for, prepare for, and support those having these medical conditions, it is recommended that an individual evaluation of each situation be performed by the appropriate medical personnel.

There may be instances where proper medical support at the Scouting event is impossible. Under such circumstances, participation may be denied. This article is not meant to be comprehensive. For information on any other health issues, contact your personal health-care provider.

## References:

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Body Mass Index: <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/bmi/>
2. Bearfoot Theory, 10 Tips for Hiking With Type 1 Diabetes: <https://bearfoottheory.com/diabetes-hiking-tips>
3. Healthline, Diabetes Foot Care: <https://www.healthline.com/health/diabetes-foot-care>
4. CDC Yellow Book 2020. Health Information for International Travel, Chapter 5—Travelers with Disabilities.

## Additional Information

Parents and other adults are requested to share the following information with the Frontiers Camp Health Officer in writing:

**Any information not covered on the participants/staff annual medical history report form that may have an impact on an individual's health, safety or well-being. This information should be forwarded to the Camp Director as soon as possible.**

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Frontiers Camp Director or Medical Team at [frontierscampvt@gmail.com](mailto:frontierscampvt@gmail.com). Please do not attach any documents to your email. Separate arrangements will be arranged to obtain these documents in a protected format.

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