### Priority Topic: ACLS

#### Key Features:

You will all take the ACLS Course during your training. The best resource for ACLS is the 2015 ACLS book by the AHA, or the NEW web-based integrated guidelines.

1. **Keep up to date** with advanced cardiac life support (ACLS) recommendations (i.e., maintain your knowledge base).

   ✓ **Recertify ACLS every 2 years and keep updated on new guidelines (q5 yrs)**

2. Promptly **defibrillate** a patient with ventricular fibrillation (V fib), or pulseless or symptomatic ventricular tachycardia (V tach).

**What you should study:**

✓ **Cardiac Arrest Algorithm 2015**

3. **Diagnose serious arrhythmias** (V tach, V fib, supraventricular tachycardia, atrial fibrillation, or second- or third-degree heart block), and **treat according to ACLS protocols**.

**What you should study:**

✓ **ACLS Rhythms for ACLS Algorithms Appendix 3**
✓ **Tachycardia with a pulse Algorithm 2015**
✓ **Bradycardia with a pulse Algorithm 2015**
4. Suspect and **promptly treat reversible causes of arrhythmias** (e.g., hyperkalemia, digoxin toxicity, cocaine intoxication) before confirmation of the diagnosis.

**What you should study:**

✓ H’s and T’s

5. Ensure adequate ventilation (i.e., with a bag valve mask), and **secure the airway** in a timely manner.

**What you should study:**

✓ ACLS Provider Manual Supplement 2016 - see section on Airway

6. In patients requiring resuscitation, **assess their circumstances** (e.g., asystole, long code times, poor pre-code prognosis, living wills) to help you decide when to stop. (Avoid inappropriate resuscitation.)

✓ Just do it!

7. In patients with serious medical problems or end-stage disease, **discuss code status and end-of-life decisions** (e.g., resuscitation, feeding tubes, levels of treatment), and readdress these issues periodically.

**What you should study:**

✓ End-of-Life Treatment Preferences AAFP 2005
✓ Advance Directives AAFP 2012

8. **Attend to family members** (e.g., with counselling, presence in the code room) during and after resuscitating a patient.

✓ Just do it!
9. In a pediatric resuscitation, use appropriate resources (e.g., Braeslow tape, the patient’s weight) to determine the correct drug doses and tube sizes.

**What you should study:** the PALS course is the best source for Peds Resusc
✓ [https://resuscitation.heartandstroke.ca/courses/pals](https://resuscitation.heartandstroke.ca/courses/pals)
✓ Web-based Pediatric ALS online AHA

Note: Shock is not dealt with in this topic.
**you will find it in Priority Topic: Trauma**