

# Priority Topic: CRISIS

## Key Features:

**For a single source on this topic:** [Crisis Management AAFP 2006](#)

1. When a patient presents with [acute emotional distress](#) :

- a) Take the [necessary time to assist](#) the patient, even if they present [unexpectedly](#).
- b) [Acknowledge](#) their feelings and help them [de-escalate](#).
- c) Employ the [therapeutic effect of conversation](#) .

### **What you should study:**

- ✓ [Trauma-Informed Care AAFP 2017](#) - **Didn't know where else to put this but it's relevant.**

2. As part of your [management](#) of a patient facing a crisis:

- a) Identify your [patient's personal resources for support](#) (e.g. family, internal strength, friends) as part of your management of a patient facing a crisis.
- b) Offer [appropriate community resources](#) (e.g. counsellor) as part of your ongoing management of a patient with a crisis.

**Remember, there are often crisis centres and shelters where people can stay in times of crisis.**

- c) [Negotiate a follow-up plan](#) with the patient.
- d) [Be careful not to cross boundaries](#) when treating a patient in crisis (e.g. lending money, providing appointments outside regular hours).

### **What you should study:**

- ✓ [Acute Stress Disorder AAFP 2012](#) **Psychological First Aid**
- ✓ [Better Boundaries 2011](#)
- ✓ [Crisis Management AAFP 2006](#) **Steps 4 & 5**

3. When a patient presents with [emotional distress](#) or [declares themselves in crisis](#):

- a) Carefully [assess](#) the [risk of harm to themselves or others](#) .
- b) [Ask](#) your patient if there are [others needing help associated with the crisis](#) .
- c) [Act accordingly](#) .

### **What you should study: see also Priority Topics Depression and Suicide**

- ✓ [Suicide Assessment BMJ Infographic](#)
- ✓ [Crisis Management AAFP 2006](#)

4. [Use psychoactive medication rationally](#) to assist patients in crisis.

5. Inquire about [unhealthy coping methods](#) (e.g. drugs, alcohol, eating, gambling, violence, sloth, promiscuity) in your patients facing crisis.

6. [Prepare your practice environment](#) for possible crises or disasters and include colleagues and staff in the planning for both medical and non-medical crises.