

COSFA

Combat and Operational Stress First Aid (COSFA) is a flexible multi-step process for the timely assessment and application of peer support for yellow and orange zone stress reactions or injuries in individuals or units.

Primary Aid functions are *Cover* and *Calm*. As we will see, Primary Aid provides tools for immediate response to an urgent need or to a crisis. Like Basic Life Support (BLS) in the spectrum of physical first aid, Primary Aid is designed to be potentially lifesaving, and to prevent further harm from occurring while the healing process begins.

Secondary Aid is used either after primary aid, or when primary aid isn't necessary, to reduce distress and restore function caused by orange zone reactions. The goal is to find ways to increase physical, social, mental, and spiritual resources that have been drained away by the four sources of stress injury. It is an extension of leadership actions and the social and spiritual structure of the unit rather than a set of one-on-one interventions undertaken in isolation.

Primary Aid

Cover: Get to safety immediately

Calm: Relax, slow down, refocus

Secondary Aid

Connect: Get support from others

Competence: Restore effectiveness

Confidence: Restore self-esteem and hope

Continuous Aid

Check: Assess, observe & listen

Coordinate: Get help and refer as needed



COSFA is designed to provide teachable and practical tools to meet challenges for leaders to identify, treat, and reintegrate stress injuries.

Continuous Aid, *Check and Coordinate*, forms the core strength at the center of COSFA; it is the spine to which all other COSFA actions are attached, and on which all other COSFA actions depend. Therefore, the knowledge and skills that make up Continuous Aid are among the most important to learn and practice.

Four Sources of Stress Injury

Wear and Tear

Inner Conflict

Loss

Life Threat

The Four Sources of Injury as risk factors can individually influence or more often combine to cause stress injuries. COSFA helps mitigate this.

Continuous Aid

STRENGTHEN

MITIGATE

IDENTIFY

TREAT



Primary Aid

IDENTIFY

TREAT

Secondary Aid

STRENGTHEN

MITIGATE

IDENTIFY

TREAT

REINTEGRATE