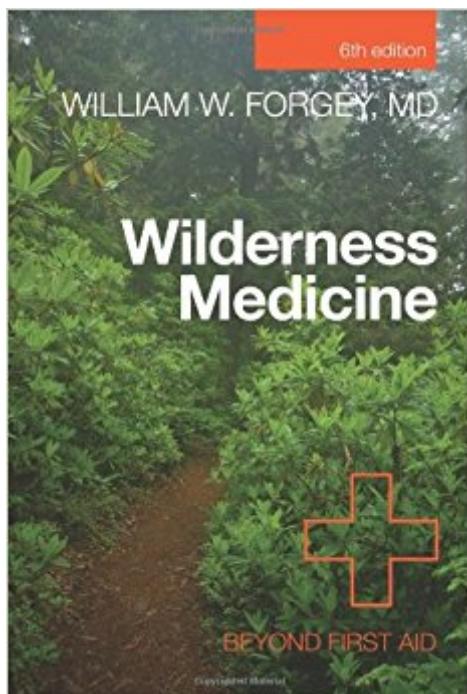


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# Wilderness Medicine: Beyond First Aid



## **Synopsis**

With Dr. William Forgey's comprehensive *Wilderness Medicine: Beyond First Aid* in hand, you can recognize, assess, and treat many kinds of medical emergencies. This fully revised and updated, illustrated text is essential reading for anyone from trip leaders, guides, and search and rescue groups to EMTs, paramedics, and physicians who must provide immediate care when access to a medical facility is difficult or impossible. Learn how to survey, assess, and stabilize the victim and the medical situation, what questions to ask to gain necessary vital information, how to manage physical symptoms as well as care for wounds and orthopedic injuries and much more.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

With Dr. William Forgey's comprehensive *Wilderness Medicine: Beyond First Aid* in hand, you can recognize, assess, and treat many kinds of medical emergencies. This illustrated text is essential reading for anyone from trip leaders, guides, and search and rescue groups to EMTs, paramedics, and physicians who must provide immediate care when access to a medical facility is difficult or impossible. Learn how to survey, assess, and stabilize the victim and the medical situation, what questions to ask to gain necessary vital information, how to manage physical symptoms as well as care for wounds and orthopedic injuries and much more.

Veteran outdoor author William Forgey, M.D. is engaged in the full-time practice of family medicine and is a member of the board of trustees of the International Association for Medical Assistance to

Travelers, a fellow of the Explorers Club, and a past president of the Wilderness Medical Society. A former Boy Scout scoutmaster and Medical Explorer Post and High Adventure Post advisor, he currently serves on the National Health and Safety Committee and as an advisory board member for the Northern Tier High Adventure Base for the Boy Scouts of America. He is the author of many wilderness medicine and camping books, including *Basic Illustrated Wilderness First Aid* (FalconGuides).

I have a Master's Degree in Epidemiology and I'm a former EMT as well as having taught first aid (ARC) and CPR (ARC & AHA). Wilderness medicine has been a life-long fascination of mine and unfortunately (fortunately?) I've had ample opportunities to put my skills and training to the test in remote areas. I have approximately 100 wilderness medicine related books in my library and I've owned every edition of this book. Having said all that I like to think my opinion on this book is a qualified one. I asked myself a simple question: If I was in the bush with [insert name] and was injured or ill to a reasonable degree but unable to offer assistance of any kind, which book would I want [insert name] to have to effectively treat me? I chose this book, "*Wilderness Medicine*." Admittedly the decision was a close one. But when I took all mitigating factors into consideration, "*Wilderness Medicine*" edged out all the rest. The reasons for my choice are simple. It is "selectively thorough" meaning that Dr. Forgey addresses those situations you are most likely to see and omits that which is exceedingly uncommon. The book is approachable by non-medically trained people. Anyone with a modicum of education and with the proper supplies can use this book to provide effective medical treatment. Third, I wanted the author to keep in mind the circumstances and the treatment environment. There's more than a few brilliant wilderness medical texts that automatically assume you're going on an expedition to the Himalayas with a staff physician and an unlimited budget for medical gear and complete with a squad of Sherpas to carry it all. Dr. Forgey kept things in perspective, especially in adhering to his basic philosophy of utilizing multifunctional and improvised components while still having redundant capabilities. Another reason this book gets the nod is the section on cardiac care including a drug list that enables effective treatment. There was a time when most serious wilderness trekkers were young and fit and healthy. No so any longer. The very young and the very old can be found in a lot of places you'd never expect to see them. Same for the unfit. I actually stopped hiking my favorite day trail on weekends...I simply grew tired of treating heat related illnesses and dehydration and musculoskeletal injuries caused by obesity. Carrying a sick or injured fat kid uphill to the trail head is not how I wanted to spend my weekends. Of course there are a few things I wish this book would have been addressed better, and

that's why I gave it four stars instead of five. I would have preferred better coverage of pediatric/child injuries including drugs and dosages. Since this book is geared towards sustained travel in remote areas I would like to see some long (2-3 weeks) term issues addressed. Complete urinary retention can be fatal. I would like to see more attention paid to wet-to-dry wound care in lieu of sutures/staples. I have encountered what I consider to be a higher than normal number of eye injuries, especially among campers who build open fires. I even developed a very light cobalt blue light source for foreign body detection. In the 6th ed. Dr. Forgey has seriously scaled back his recommended medical kit. Prior editions included a well thought out very sophisticated medical surgical assemblage that seemingly reached it's pinnacle of development in the 4th ed. In this edition (and the 5th) it's been reduced to a splinter removal-hemorrhoid treatment first aid kit unworthy of being called a medical kit. I'm not sure why this was done. Admittedly the kit was very expensive especially if you opted for imported German surgical instruments (Miltex brand-\$\$\$\$) as I did. But I don't think that justified cutting it back that seriously, especially for something so critical as your medical kit. In fact, I'm going to use this venue to ask Dr. Forget for a new edition. A lot of very effective products he recommended in earlier editions are no longer available or are impossible to find: Nu Gauze pads, Spyroflex everything, Beirsdorf CoverStrip II wound closure tape, pontocaine ophthalmic OINTMENT (incredibly easy to use...I sorely miss it!)...and other items I can't recall at the moment. So come on Doc! Your number one...at the top! Give us a 7th ed. and stay there.

I am one of those "crazy preppers" and an instructor in the field with military, survival and some medical experience. I needed/wanted a good, basic medical "How To" book for inclusion in my "Go Bag", which could also be recommended to others. This is the one. It covers a surprising number of problems, illnesses, and injuries in clear, concise, and lucid fashion, easily comprehensible by the lay person without any medical training and it is wonderfully free of jargon. More importantly, the topics are easily accessible (no fumbling through an extended index trying to find the right entry while your buddy bleeds to death). Of huge importance to the average person is the fact that Dr. Forgey goes out of his way to demystify this stuff - For instance, you do not have to spend hours (as I have) practicing suturing and "surgeons' knots" on raw (skin on) chicken breasts. The author, instead, shows you how to sew up a wound in a few paragraphs and with a handful of clear illustrations and then helpfully notes, after showing you the best knots to use, that, when you tie off, "any knot will do". For the first timer whose hands are shaking and who is about to throw up because of all the blood, that is a d\*\*n good thing to know, because it takes the pressure off. Just sew it and tie it. This is not about making a pretty scar, it's about keeping you alive under exigent

circumstances with minimal skills and minimal equipment, which is what you are going to need if and when the SHTF. In a book this size (and it's small enough to pack), there are going to be some omissions and this book has them, but they are surprisingly few and what it does have more than compensates for the occasional oversight. Blessedly, there is a minimal amount of verbage wasted on basic stuff, like washing your hands and boiling your water and not relieving yourself in your water source. This book presumes you are not a complete idiot and, instead, largely confines itself to providing a good "hands on" instruction on how to deal with specific medical problems which can arise while you're fleeing the chaos. It does contain some information on what all to keep in your medical kit, though it is weak on providing acquisition options and sources. It is also somewhat weak on the issue of medication effects and usage, however, before you stick a copy of the "Merck Manual" or the "PDR" in your back pack, you might want to check out the (green tabbed) medication section in Hesperian's "Where There is No Doctor", which is the best "field guide" to that particular topic I've encountered (note that you can download that section from the Hesperian website). See my review of that book. Bottomline, unless you have an "M.D." behind your name, don't go into the woods without this book in your pack.

Of course I loved this book. But I admit that I wrote it for the isolated expedition that is self-contained or the survivalist stuck on his or her own - it does indicate when someone should be evacuated, but further describes long-term management when that is not possible. This is the 6th edition, with the first written in 1979

This book is surprising. First, it's easy to read. If you have little to no medical experience, you're going to be able to figure out what to do. But, if you have medical experience, you're still going to learn things. But, what surprised me is that it lists medications. Most books assume you have no access to meds in wilderness or other "no access to a hospital" situations. But, sometimes, you will. Even if it's just a bottle of penicillin someone left in a bag, or a bottle of Keflex in an old medicine chest. So, it's nice to have the guidelines there, on the off-hand chance that you have them. Very few people, outside of the regularly prescribing medical community, know which antibiotics to use for what. So, kudos to covering every possibility, even a good one!

This book seems to closely follow the same protocols as EMT-B training curriculum. Granted it does have some recommendations on medications that could be given, which in an urban setting would not be wise as you should get diagnosed and prescribed by a medical professional. But in a

"backwoods" situation, when help is not going to be immediately available, it seems to be sound, time tested advise.

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