

SPARK: A Quick Action Guide for Rural Clinicians

Spot · Prioritize · Act · Reassess · Keep Watch



Spot what's wrong

- Trust your gut. Something off?
 - Look at vitals, behavior, breathing, mentation, nurse concern
 - Ask: *"Would I want someone watching me if I looked like this?"*
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Prioritize what matters most

- ABCs first: Airway, Breathing, Circulation
 - What's your biggest risk if you do nothing right now?
 - Consider: isolation, distance from help, transport delays
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Act with what you have

- Oxygen? Fluids? Positioning? Narcan? Glucose?
 - Don't wait for the perfect – start with the possible
 - Communicate clearly to others what you're doing and why
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Reassess and adjust

- Is the patient responding?
 - What else could this be?
 - Loop in anyone you can – a second voice is always helpful
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Keep watch and escalate

- Continue close observation
 - Escalate early if you're unsure
 - Document what you did and what you saw
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Use SPARK when things get real

Whether you're on night shift with no backup or juggling a full board, this tool helps center your thinking, guide your actions, and speak up with confidence.

Disclaimer

This guide is not a substitute for clinical judgment. All scenarios are fictional or de-identified to protect privacy.

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