



Nursing Exploration Patch Program

This Patch Program is For: Brownies, Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors (Grades 2-12).

Purpose: To educate Girl Scouts about the variety of career opportunities available in the nursing profession, focusing on exploring the need for nurses, the many roles of nurses, education requirements, nursing career resources, and general health/wellness information.

Nursing Is Important! The aging of America's baby boomers and the increased demand for nurses in specialized areas of care have combined to create a serious need for nurses for decades to come. The result is that the future for nurses has never looked brighter! Nursing is a profession that involves the use of your intelligence, skill, and compassion to make a difference in peoples' lives.

Completing this interest project will increase your knowledge of the variety of career opportunities available in nursing as well as the growing need for nurses. Books, magazines, videos, websites, nursing professionals, nursing schools, and nursing organizations are available as resources for this project.

Requirements to Earn This Patch:

- Brownies (Grades 2-3): Complete **4** of the activities below (at least one from each category).
- Juniors (Grades 4-5): Complete **6** of the activities below (at least one from each category).
- Cadettes/Seniors/Ambassadors (Grades 6-12): Complete **8** activities below (at least one from each category).

Troop Leaders, Girl Scouts, and assisting Nurse Professionals should choose activities that are appropriate for each grade level, and then tailor the activities to the individual girls.

Category 1: Educational Lessons

Family Medical History: Research your family's medical history. Include parents, aunts, uncles, and grandparents at a minimum. Do you see any patterns in your family's medical history? Which can be inherited? What are some medical conditions that can be inherited?

Nursing Opportunities: Use the internet to explore and research nursing. Identify at least five settings in which nurses can work, five areas of practice in which nurses can specialize, and three different patient populations that nurses can work with.

Nursing Founders: Learn about Florence Nightingale and Clara Barton. How did they help pioneer modern nursing? What contributions did they make to nursing and society? Are there any similarities between them and Juliette Gordon Low?

Germs & Infection: Research or complete an activity on what germs are and how infection is spread. Discuss some common infectious diseases. How is each spread? What can you do to prevent their spread?

This special interest patch has been created in conjunction with the South Central Iowa Area Health Education Center (SC AHEC) at Indian Hills Community College. Funding for the patches has made possible through a state AHEC grant from the Health Resources Services Administration (grant#1 U76HP08262-02-00) to the University Of Iowa College Of Nursing.

Healthy Lifestyles: Design a poster, storyboard, or video depicting the importance of a healthy lifestyle and/or healthy behavior. Examples could include not smoking, avoiding drug abuse, weight control, immunizations, seat-belt use, or helmet use.

Medical Conditions: Research information on an illness or medical condition. Put together a poster, short paper, brochure, or information guide on a particular disease, condition, or illness. Examples could include asthma, diabetes, cancer, or depression. Present your findings to other members of your group.

Learn How a Body System Works: As an individual or a group, select a body system (cardiovascular system, nervous system, etc.) and understand how that body system works. Get some help from a nurse, health educator, or other health care provider!

Computers & Health Care: Speak with a nurse about how computers are used in health care. Make a list of the various ways computers may be used in the treatment of patients or documenting their care.

Category 2: Skill Building/Career Building

Nursing Skills - Vital Signs: Learn how to perform some basic nursing skills (i.e. taking someone's temperature, pulse, respirations, or blood pressure). Have a nurse or other medical provider show you how.

Hand Washing: Learn about the importance of proper hand-washing. Complete an activity designed to teach you how to properly wash your hands.

First-Aid: Make a first-aid kit. Discuss how each item in the kit would be used to treat minor injuries and illnesses. Older girls may even want to take a first-aid course. Also, if you haven't earned it yet, you could earn your grade level's First Aid Badge with this activity!

Nursing Skills - Medication & Injections: (For Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors only) Have a nurse or medical professional show you how to measure medications in a syringe. Practice drawing different amounts of medicine in syringes of various sizes, and then try giving injections into an orange. Discuss infection control and how medical professionals dispose of "sharps."

Nursing Equipment: Learn about the equipment and supplies used by nurses. Get a nurse to tell you about this equipment, how it works, and when it's used. Practice using equipment such as pulse oximeters, Doppler's, glucose monitors, and heart monitors.

Job Shadowing: Contact your local hospital, doctor's office, health clinic, school nurse, camp nurse or any nurse you know, and ask if you can shadow them for a day or half day (whatever their schedule allows). Document all the activities you observe. Answer the following questions:

1. What type of role does the nurse play throughout the day?
2. What equipment do they use?
3. How does the nurse incorporate science and math into his/her role?
4. Would you want to work as a nurse? Why or why not?

Nursing Education: Research the various types of nursing programs offered in your area, the types of degrees offered, and the entrance requirements. After finding this information, decide what school you would attend and what classes and/or other requirements you would need to meet in order to be accepted at the school.

Visit a Nursing School: Interview a nursing student or nursing instructor. Ask for a tour of the facility, and discuss the types of classes one takes to become a nurse.

Research Nursing Scholarships: Investigate scholarships available for students interested in attending nursing school. What are the requirements? Who's eligible? Are there more scholarships offered for specialized areas of study? Do scholarships differ depending on the type of degree you are seeking or the type of school you attend? Document your findings.

Advanced Nursing Degrees: Explore and research what nurse anesthetists (CRNA) and nurse practitioners (ARNP) do. How is what do different from what a regular nurse does? Where would they work? What education do they require?

Interview a Nurse: Interview someone who has been a nurse for at least 5 years. What are the benefits of becoming a nurse? What challenges have they faced? What are their favorite and least favorite things about nursing? Has nursing changed since they started? How? How do they stay updated about changes in the medical field?

Category 3: Service Project

Participate in a Community Health Project: Find ways to participate in a community health project such as a cancer walk, blood drive, wellness screening, health fair, etc. Help with registration, offer water, provide sun protection, or find another way you can help. Write a brief statement about how the health project helped the community, what you learned about the illness/condition you were volunteering for, and how it impacts those who are coping with the disease (or the community in general).

Volunteer Project: As an individual or a group, do a project for a health care facility. Contact a doctor's office, health clinic, hospital, retirement home, or nursing center to find out what sort of project might meet their needs. Examples might be collecting magazines for offices or residents, donating and taping books for elderly or very young patients, donating toys to a pediatric unit, designing a "boredom" box with activities for hospital patients, decorating a nursing home unit for a holiday event, planning a special event for the residents of a nursing home, etc. The sky is the limit!

Volunteer Time: Volunteer for a minimum of 4 hours in a doctor's office, health clinic, hospital, retirement home, or nursing center. Write a journal entry about your time there. What surprised you? What was your favorite part? What did you learn about the medical field while you were there?

Congratulations!

Once you've completed all of your requirements, email us at info@gsiowa.org with the number of girls who participated, your troop's grade level, and photos of your projects (if possible). Please allow at least two weeks for patches to be mailed.

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