

Scenarios Module 5

Bleeding and Shock, Specific Injuries, Muscle and Bone Injuries and Injuries to the Head and Back

Neurologic Emergencies

You arrive at an auto-pedestrian accident involving two children and a middle-aged patient. The two children were crossing the street and the car struck one. Your partner goes to the one who was struck and yells that she is bad. You check the other girl and she is uninjured. You ask some bystanders to stay with her and go check on the driver. The driver appears to be unconscious and is bleeding freely from a forehead laceration. As you establish responsiveness, it is obvious that the driver is drunk. The driver complains of neck pain and, when coherent, is quite abusive and won't stay still.

Explain your treatment of the driver, including how you would keep him or her still.

The Acute Abdomen

You respond to the local high school to find a 15-year-old girl with severe lower abdominal pain. History reveals that she normally has significant pain with menstruation and that she is experiencing vaginal bleeding currently but that it is "more red" than normal. She has not had a period for two months and thought she might be pregnant, so she went to "a guy that her friend knows and had that fixed a few days ago." This "guy" was not a physician, just a friend of a friend. She does not want to go to the hospital because her parents may find out what she has done.

Would you advise her to go to the hospital? Why or why not? How would you encourage her to go to the hospital if you thought it was important?

Diabetic Emergencies

It is 8:30 A.M., and you are called to a construction site for an unconscious employee. The coworkers are yelling at the patient and tell you that he was slurring his speech and staggering around for about an hour, then complained of feeling nauseated, went into the bathroom, and passed out. His breath smells sweet like alcohol. The patient is not wearing a medical information tag, and nobody knows much about him. The foreman is saying that the company won't pay for an ambulance to take a drunk to sober up.

How would you deal with this situation? What other problems, besides alcohol intoxication, may present the same signs and symptoms? How would you tell them apart? Would you transport this patient?

Allergic Reactions

You respond to a call to find a 24-year-old unconscious patient. Her face is quite cyanotic and swollen, and she appears to have a rash over most of her body. There is some respiratory effort, but there does not appear to be any air exchange. You contact the hospital and get a new physician, whom you do not recognize. The physician denies your request to administer epinephrine. By now, your partner has obtained vitals; they are blood pressure of 60/20 mm Hg, pulse of 140 beats/min, and no respirations. Your second request for epinephrine is denied. The hospital is 15 minutes away.

How would you deal with this situation? Would you spend more time trying to convince the physician? What would your treatment include besides epinephrine?

Substance Abuse and Poisoning

You are called to provide medical support to a police SWAT team when they bust a local drug house. The entry goes well, and no one is injured. You are called into the house for a patient who reportedly had a seizure just a few moments ago. The patient appears to be unconscious. As you approach, you notice that the patient is heavily tattooed and has significant tracks on his arms from IV drug use. From the description provided by witnesses and the patient's response to painful stimulus, you question whether the patient actually had a seizure.

How would you treat this patient? Would you attempt to prove that the patient is faking the seizure?

Environmental Emergencies

You are at the park with a friend when you hear a yell for help. You turn to find a small group of people standing around someone who is lying on the ground. You identify yourself and take control of the scene. The patient is middle aged and, for religious reasons, is dressed in many layers of clothing, including a covering over the head. You find out that the people are on vacation from Alaska and have been here about a week. The weather is unusually hot, with temperatures over 100F (38C). The patient feels very hot, and what skin you can see is quite red. You suggest removing some of the patient's clothing, and the patient refuses. You move the patient to the shade and offer some water to drink. The patient again refuses to remove any clothing. The patient suddenly loses consciousness. EMS has not been activated and is approximately 15 minutes away.

How would you treat this person? Would you remove some of the patient's clothing? Why or why not?

Behavioral Emergencies

You respond to an address that you have been to several times before, where you find a woman who has once again been beaten up. She is scared and bruised and may have broken ribs. Her children are scared and crying and hide when you enter. You clean up some of the woman's scrapes and apply cold packs to her face. She has once again refused transport to the hospital. While you are treating her, the door opens. Her husband has returned. He is holding a knife and threatening you, your partner, and his wife.

What is your first concern? What precautions should you have taken? How would you deal with this situation?

Obstetrics and Gynecological Emergencies

You respond to a woman in labor in a local supermarket. You find her seated in a chair near the checkout stands. The look on her face tells you that she is definitely in labor. She tells you that her due date was three days ago, her bag of waters broke about an hour ago, and she has had a small amount of blood appear about 1 1/2 hours ago. The man with her is encouraging her to go home. He insists that they had planned a home delivery, and that is what they should still do. The man is quite insistent, and the woman appears scared and confused. This is their first child.

What other signs and symptoms would you check to determine whether the woman can be transported anywhere or whether the delivery is imminent? If there is time to transport, would you support the mother going home? Why or why not?

Kinematics of Trauma

As you approach an auto-pedestrian accident you see a 4-year-old child lying on the pavement about 10' in front of the car. You also notice a person who appears to be a parent running toward the child. Before you can respond, the parent picks the child up to comfort the child. The child immediately goes limp, and you suspect that this is because of a severed spine caused by the movement.

Would you tell the parent what he or she just did? Would you have the parent lay the child back down? If the parent asks why the child suddenly went limp, what would you say? Would you report the parent's actions? If so, to whom would you report them?

Bleeding

You are called to a local jewelry store in response to a patient who slipped and fell. You are led into the rear of the store, where you find that the patient not only fell, but fell through a display case and is bleeding severely. You immediately recognize the need for much more BSI protection. Your goggles, mask, and gown are out in the truck.

Would you leave this severely bleeding patient to get more protection for yourself? If so, why? If you did leave and the patient died, would you be liable?

Shock

You are treating a seriously injured motorcycle driver when the driver of the car that turned in front of the motorcycle starts asking you questions. At first, they are the kind you would expect, such as whether the motorcyclist will be okay, but they soon move to whose fault it was. Then the driver begins to get in your way, trying to help treat the patient. After you repeatedly ask the driver to step back, he threatens you and then disappears. You realize that the driver had very pale skin color and was probably suffering from hypoperfusion due to emotional stress (psychogenic shock).

How would you deal with the driver? Would you send someone after the driver? If so, who? Is there a chance that the driver will return and carry out the threats? How does all of this affect your care of the motorcyclist?

Soft-Tissue Injury

You are providing medical support at a local high school football game and are called to the sideline to check out the star quarterback. He has been hurt a few plays ago and had hopped off the field. He is now able to place a little weight on the injured leg but limps badly. The game is against the rival high school and is for the league championship. The coach and player want him to return to the game. The player's parents want you to check him first. His knee has some swelling and is warm to the touch. The player is sure that he can play on it if he wears a knee brace from one of the other players. The coach has a little sports medicine training, and you are the only other medically trained person there.

Would you allow the player to continue playing if he wants to? Would you help him put on another person's knee brace? Who else may be able to provide assistance with this decision? Do these decisions fall under EMT protocols?