

Skill Station

Immobilization Skills

Objective

- Demonstrate proper manual stabilization of the head and neck.

Reference

- *PHTLS: Prehospital Trauma Life Support*, 10th ed.

Evaluation

- Verify the accuracy of the student's ability to properly apply and maintain manual stabilization of the head and neck on a manikin or volunteer patient by observing the student's procedures and technique.

Equipment

- Volunteer patient or manikin
- Cervical collars—multiple sizes
- Personal protective equipment—1 set per student

NOTE: A cervical collar is an adjunct device that is used in one step of a multiple-step process to provide spinal motion restriction. The cervical collar by itself does not provide complete spinal stabilization.

Instructor Guidelines

1. Ensure that each student has all required materials.
2. Read the objective and the evaluation statement to students.

Performance Steps

Manual Stabilization of the Head and Neck (Two Practitioners)

1. The first practitioner applies and maintains manual stabilization of the patient's head and neck in a

neutral in-line position until the patient has been appropriately managed.

2. The second practitioner utilizes their fingers to measure the distance between the patient's lower jaw and shoulder.
3. The second practitioner keeps their fingers parallel to the patient's jaw.
4. The second practitioner selects a cervical collar that matches the patient's measurements or adjusts a sizable collar (per manufacturer's recommendations) to fit the measurements and locks the collar into position.
5. While the first practitioner continues to provide manual in-line stabilization, the second practitioner positions the correctly sized cervical collar around the patient's neck and secures it in place.
6. The first practitioner maintains manual stabilization of the patient's head and neck until the patient's head has been appropriately positioned for movement to or transport on the ambulance stretcher.

Critical Criteria

- The student correctly placed the cervical collar.
- The student maintained in-line stabilization of the patient's head and neck.
- The student performed the procedure in a manner safe to the patient.