

Skill Station

Primary Survey of a Trauma Patient

Objective

- Demonstrate how to perform a primary survey of a trauma patient with appropriate interventions.

References

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

Evaluation

- Verify the student's ability to systematically perform a patient assessment with appropriate interventions on a simulated patient.
- Appropriate interventions during the primary survey of a trauma patient are determined by the patient's injuries and clinical signs and symptoms, using the XABCDE approach.

Equipment

- Moulaged manikin or student/volunteer with simulated injuries—1
- Personal protective equipment—1 set per student
- EMS jump bag—1

Instructor Guidelines

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

Performance Steps

1. The student assesses the scene for safety and notes attempts to maintain situational awareness.
2. Prior to contact with the patient, the student verbalizes presence of the EMS crew to the patient.
3. The student develops a general impression by visually scanning the patient for major (exsanguinating) hemorrhage that requires immediate intervention. Note: Steps 2 and 3 should be performed simultaneously.

4. The student performs a rapid survey to assess the patient for major (exsanguinating) hemorrhage and wounds.
 - a. Rapid survey of upper extremities/shoulders
 - b. Rapid survey of pelvis
 - c. Rapid survey of buttocks and lower extremities
 - d. Rapid survey of head and neck
5. The student verbalizes addressing any exsanguinating hemorrhage identified by applying a tourniquet (junctional or extremity as appropriate), packing the wound, or applying direct pressure (neck), as appropriate.
6. The student performs an assessment of the trauma patient's airway to identify patency.
 - a. The student verbalizes interventions to address any challenge with airway patency.
7. The student assesses the rate and effectiveness of breathing.
 - a. The student assesses the patient's chest and axilla.
 - b. The student assesses the patient's chest for symmetry and abnormalities.
 - c. The student assesses the patient's back.
 - d. The student verbalizes assisting the patient's ventilations as necessary and appropriate.
8. The student checks the trauma patient's pulse and evaluates the patient's circulatory status to identify signs of shock.
 - a. The student assesses the patient's abdomen and flanks for injuries, tenderness, or guarding.
 - b. The student checks for pelvic instability.
 - c. The student verbalizes applying a pelvic binder, administering fluid boluses, and transporting the patient rapidly to a trauma center, as appropriate.
9. The student assesses the trauma patient's neurologic (disability) status.

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10. The student exposes the patient to address life threats that are not visible and verbalizes the steps taken to prevent hypothermia in the patient.
11. The student reassesses the effectiveness of prior interventions with each step and at regular intervals.

Critical Criteria

- The student identified and treated life threats.
- The student used the XABCDE approach in the primary survey.
- The student addressed problems identified in the primary survey before moving on to the next step.