

## Skill Station

### Tourniquet Application

#### Objective

- Demonstrate the proper application of a tourniquet used by your local EMS system.

#### References

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

#### Evaluation

- Verify the student's ability to quickly and effectively apply a tourniquet to a fellow student or manikin by observing the student's procedure and technique.

#### Equipment

- Volunteer patient or manikin
- Gloves—1 pair per student
- 1 tourniquet per student:
  - Commercially available training tourniquet
  - Tourniquet approved by local medical director

#### Instructor Guidelines

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

#### Performance Steps

1. The student removes the tourniquet from the carrying pouch.
2. The student inserts the patient's extremity through the loop of the self-adhering band or wraps the self-adhering band around the extremity and reattaches it to the friction adapter buckle.
3. The student positions the tourniquet 2–3 inches above the wound or, for transport times of less than 2 hours, as high as possible on the limb. The student should never place a tourniquet over the elbow or knee.
4. The student secures the tourniquet.
  - a. If applying to a leg wound, the self-adhering band must be routed through both sides of the

friction adapter buckle and fastened back on itself. This will prevent it from loosening when twisting the windlass clip or tri-ring (per the device's guidelines and only applicable to some tourniquets).

5. The student twists the windlass rod until the bleeding stops (usually no more than three 180-degree turns). The student ensures that the distal pulse is no longer palpable.
  - a. Note: The instructor monitors the patient's distal pulse and prompts the student when it is no longer palpable.
  - b. Use care to not let the student overtighten the tourniquet on a fellow student or volunteer patient.
  - c. If pain becomes too severe, discontinue the tourniquet application.
6. The student locks the rod in place with the windlass clip or tri-ring. Note: For added security (and always before moving the patient), secure the windlass rod with the windlass strap. For smaller extremities, continue to wind the self-adhering band across the windlass clip and secure it under the windlass strap.
7. The student grasps the windlass strap, pulls it tight, and adheres it to the Velcro on the windlass clip (per the device's guidelines).
8. The student documents time of tourniquet application and documents absence of distal pulses.
9. The student releases and removes the tourniquet.

#### Critical Criteria

- The student placed the tourniquet proximal to the wound.
- The student twisted the windlass rod sufficiently to control the bleeding.
- The student secured the tourniquet properly for an extremity wound.
- The student documented time of tourniquet application and checked for absence of distal pulses.