

Emotional Aspects of Emergency Care



Lesson 3: The Well-Being of the Emergency Medical Responder

You Are the Emergency Medical Responder

Your police unit responds to a call for a medical emergency involving a man who has collapsed in front of a school building. When you and your partner arrive, you see that the man is bleeding from the mouth and face. Vomit and blood are on the ground around him. "His face hit the ground when he fell," a bystander says. The victim does not appear to be breathing.

How stressful would a situation like this be for you?

Stressful Situations

- Dangerous situations
- Physical and psychological demands
- Critically injured or ill people
- Death and dying patients
- Overpowering sights, smells and sounds
- Multiple-patient situations
- Angry or upset patients, family and bystanders



Exceptions to Resuscitation

- Valid Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) order present at the scene
- Patient with obvious signs of death
 - Tissue decay
 - Rigor mortis
 - Obvious mortal wounds
 - Dependent lividity – pooling of blood
- Situation endangering to EMR's life

Activity

You are the first to arrive on the scene of a multi-vehicle collision involving a tractor trailer and several cars. The driver of the tractor trailer is severely injured with a portion of his hand partially severed. A person in one of the cars, a young teenager, has been thrown through the windshield and is lying in a contorted position on the side of the road. Another person is trapped in the car and unable to move her leg.

What are some of the issues in this situation that might cause stress?

Steps to Relieve Stress After an Incident

- Quick relaxation techniques
- Healthy meal
- No caffeinated beverages
- Avoidance of alcohol and drugs
- Event review
- Rest
- Involvement in physical activity
- Debriefing/defusing

Enrichment: Health of the Emergency Medical Responder

- Physical well-being
 - Physical fitness, nutrition and sleep
 - Prevention of disease transmission
 - Safety, including protection from the sun
- Mental well-being
 - Stress management techniques
 - Balance of work and life demands
 - Avoid alcohol or drug use or misuse
- Read Enrichment pages 38-40