

## PATIENT ASSESSMENT

### 1. Take Charge – Assign a Leader!

### 2. Size Up the Scene.

Determine if scene is safe for –

Rescuers, patient, bystanders

If it is not safe, make it safe!

What is the mechanism of injury? What happened and when?

How many patients are there?

Are we going to need additional help?

If yes, **WAIT** until you have determined your exact location and have filled out the Emergency Report Form **BEFORE** you send anyone out.

Stabilize the spine if there is any suspicion of spinal injury.

### 3. Perform Initial Assessment and Urgent First Aid – ABCs + LOC.

Airway open? If no, open it as per CPR guidelines.

Breathing? If no, breathe for them as per CPR guidelines.

Circulation? Does patient have a pulse? Is there any major bleeding? If yes, stop it.

Level of Consciousness? (LOC) – AVPU

Alert, oriented to person, place, & time? Not alert, but responds to Verbal commands?

Not alert, but responds to Painful stimuli? Unresponsive?

### 4. Protect the Patient.

Protect from the environment – Cold, heat, wet, lightening.

Prevent further injury – Examine, then move, if needed, unless you suspect spinal injury.

Reduce fear and worry.

### 5. Examine Head to Toe – Check for other injuries.

With gloved hands, palpate the patient from head to toe checking for deformities, contusions, abrasions, punctures or penetrations, burns, tenderness, lacerations, swelling.

Remove clothing as needed to see injuries.

Do NOT forget to check the back.

**Vital Signs** – Retake depending on severity of injury – Every 5, 15, or 60 minutes.

Heart Rate – Normal 60-100 beats per minute

Breathing – Normal 12-20 breaths per minute, should be equal and non-labored

Skin – Pink, warm, and dry

Pupils – Equal, round, reactive to light

**History** – SAMPLE

Signs and Symptoms – What do you see and what do they describe?

Allergies

Medications

Pertinent past medical history

Last oral intake – When did they last eat and drink?

Events leading to the injury

### 6. Plan What to Do.

Organize activities to maximize treatment with minimum cost to patient and rescuers.

After providing urgent care and treatment, spend time to plan what to do based on the injuries, party size and physical condition, terrain, weather, and your location in respect to outside aid.

### 7. Carry Out the Plan.

**Always provide for the safety of all members!**

*By Jeanette Kehoe, DC, EMT*

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## DETERMINE THE LEADERS

### INCIDENT MANAGER

Primary focal point for communication and coordination – The IM refrains from being a **key** worker and ensures that the victim and the team are not at risk for further accident or injury.

### FIRST AID LEADER

Individual with the **most appropriate** medical experience and initiative – Also identify a first aid helper. The first aid leader focuses on prompt assessment and treatment of the victim.

### GO-FOR-HELP LEADER

Individual with the requisite strength, stamina, and endurance to make the journey back to the trailhead – Must be able to orient, navigate, and find the route back for help. Also, identify a co-runner.

### BIVY LEADER

Individual with good organizational skills – The Bivy Leader must verify that the go-for-help team does not depart with some essential item needed for the team or the victim's well being.

## EMERGENCY SITUATION PROCESS

### STEP 1 – SECURE THE ACCIDENT SITE.

- Prime Directive: Make sure the accident site is safe.
  - Don't start with one victim, and end up with two!!
- In order of priority:
  - Is the site safe for the rescuers?
  - Is the site safe for bystanders?
  - Is the site safe for the victim?

### STEP 2 – PROVIDE FIRST AID.

- Prime Directive: Treat the victim without making the condition worse.
- Assess the victim's condition (see *Patient Assessment*.) so that you can obtain appropriate help.
- Provide first aid to the level of your training.

### STEP 3: GO FOR HELP.

- Prime Directive: Maximize the chances that help will arrive, and that it is the right help.
- Prior to departure:
  - Do you know the exact location of victim?
  - What will happen when you reach the trailhead?
  - Do you understand the nature of the victim's injuries?
  - Will you mark the return route for Mountain Rescue?

### STEP 4: PREPARE TO BIVY.

- Prime Directive: Prepare to spend the night, or at least keep victim and rescuers protected from the elements.
  - Shelter – The set-up must be quick and reliable.
  - Fire – The fire starter must work **first time, every time**.
  - Water – Drink even when not thirsty.

#### ESP

1. Secure site
2. First Aid
3. Get help
4. Bivy