

The Well-Being of the EMT

EMS Stress Factors

Critically ill or Dying Patients	Dealing with friends or family members
Mass Casualty	Serious Trauma-amputations, burns, etc
Death of a child	Death of an elderly person
Multiple Role Responsibilities	Angry or confused person
Absence of challenge – routine transports	Lack of recognition
Limited Career mobility	

Stress of the patient - Some of the factors that influence how a patient reacts to stress include:

Socioeconomic background	Fear of medical personnel
Alcohol or substance abuse	Mental disorders
Reactions to medications	Nutritional status
History of chronic disease	Feelings of guilt

Death and Dying - 5 Stages to Grief Process (May last Minutes to Weeks)

DENIAL AND ISOLATION	ANGER
BARGAINING	DEPRESSION
ACCEPTANCE	

Dealing with the Patient or Family Member

- Calm, efficient care
- Reassurance
- Explain all procedures
- Listen to the patient
- Be honest - do not give false hopes
- Professional tone of voice

Dealing with the death of a family member

- Professional manner
- Use the clergy or Emergency Department staff whenever possible
- Handle the body with respect and dignity
- Preserve possible crime scene
- CPR should be initiated unless....

Warning Signs of Stress

Irritability to co-workers, family, friends	Difficulty making decisions
Difficulty sleeping	Anxiety
Guilt	Loss of appetite
Loss of emotion	Loss of interest in work
Seriously slowed thinking	Chest Pain
Panic reactions	Shock-like state
Crying spells	

Burnout- a condition of chronic fatigue and frustration that results from mounting stress.

Ways to deal with stress

- Strenuous physical exercise in first 24-48 hours
- Structure time to stay busy
- Keep life as normal as possible
- Eat balanced meals (sugars, complex carbohydrates, fats)
- Get adequate amount of sleep
- Keep a journal
- Talk to people - co-workers, mental health professionals

Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD)

- A confidential group discussion of a critical incident
- Usually occurs 24-72 hours after incident
- Opportunity to discuss feelings, fears and reactions to an event
- Not used as an investigation or interrogation

!!!!!!!!!!SAFETY OF THE EMT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT!!!!!!!!!!

Protection from infection

- Hepatitis B
- Tuberculosis
- HIV (AIDS)
- SARS

Bodily fluid from an individual gets in:

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Cuts | Abrasions |
| Open Blisters | Puncture wounds |
| Certain rashes | Open sores |
| Bites | Mucous membranes- covering all bodily openings |

Precautions to take:

- Knowing beforehand that the person is infected
- Hand washing ***
- Universal precautions (BSI)
- High-Efficiency Particulate (HEPA) respirator
- Clean work area- 10% bleach solution
- Vaccination
- Document all exposures

OSHA-Occupational Safety and Health Administration

Agency that develops and publishes guidelines for safety in the workplace

Hazards

Identifying Hazardous Materials

Warning labels

Placards

DOT Identification Numbers

CHEMTREC 1-800-424-9300

Hazardous Materials: The Emergency Response Guide Book

Toxicity levels - 0, 1, 2, 3,4

Electricity

Do not attempt to move downed electrical lines

Lightning

Fire

Smoke

High ambient temperature

Oxygen Deficiency

Toxic gases (carbon monoxide, cyanide gas)

Confined Space - any area not intended for human occupation

Water Towers

Grain storage towers (silos)

Wells

Water and waste pipes

Hazardous Conditions

Lack of oxygen

Hazardous Materials

Toxic gases

Water, fire, moving machine parts

Traffic Accidents (MVC/MVA)

Traffic

Fuel leaking/fire

Weather

Power lines

Glass and sharp objects

other fluid leaks

Terrain

Protective Clothing

Weather protection

Gloves

Helmet

Boots

Turnout or bunker gear

Safety glasses/ face shield

Ear Protection

Violent Situations

Evaluate the potential for violence before entering

Stage at a safe distance until scene is secure (up wind)

Involve Police

Always have an escape route

Never turn your back on a patient