BEHAVIORAL EMERGENCIES

OBJECTIVES

5-7 Identify basic facts and terms about behavioral changes and emergencies, broad causative factors, and implications of dealing with behavioral emergencies, with at least 80% accuracy.

OBJECTIVES

- Recognizing Behavioral Problems
- Assessment of Suicide Risk
- Medical/Legal Considerations

OBJECTIVES

- Principles for Assessing Behavioral Emergency Patients
- Assessment for Potential Violence

OBJECTIVES

- Methods to Calm Behavioral Emergency Patients

Recognizing Behavioral Problems

- Behavior
  - Manner in which a person acts.

Recognizing Behavioral Problems

- Behavioral emergency
  - When patient acts in an abnormal way that is unacceptable or intolerable to patient, family, or community

Recognizing Behavioral Problems

- Behavioral changes
  - May appear to result from a psychological disturbance or physical causes

Recognizing Behavioral Problems

- Common causes
  - Decreased blood sugar
  - Lack of oxygen
  - Inadequate blood flow
  - Head trauma

Recognizing Behavioral Problems

- Common causes
  - Mind-altering substances
  - Psychogenic
  - Excessive cold
  - Excessive heat

Assessment for Suicide Risk

- Depression
  - Sad, tearful
  - Thoughts of death

Assessment for Suicide Risk

- Suicidal gestures
  - EMT-B's must be able to recognize and intervene before the patient commits to act of suicide

Risk Factors

- Over 40, single, widowed or divorce, alcoholic, depressed
- Defined lethal plan
- Unusual gathering of articles can cause death

Risk Factors

- Previous history
- Recent diagnosis of serious illness
- Recent loss of loved one
- Arrest, imprisonment, loss of job

Assessment Findings

- Patient in unsafe environment
- Displaying self destructive behavior

Assessment Findings

- Important questions to ask
  - How does the patient feel
  - Determine suicidal tendencies
  - Is patient a threat to self or others

Assessment Findings

- Important questions to ask
  - Is there a medical problem
  - Interventions

Emergency Care

- Scene size-up, personal safety
- Patient assessment
- Calm the patient

Emergency Care

- Restrain if necessary
- Transport
- If overdose, bring medications, drugs found to medical facility

Medical/Legal Considerations

- Emotionally disturbed patient who consents to care greatly reduces legal problems

Medical/Legal Considerations

- Patient's who resist treatment
  - May threaten EMT-B or others

Medical/Legal Considerations

- Avoid unreasonable force
  - Reasonable force depends on what force was necessary to keep patient from injury self or others

Reasonable Force

- Determined by many factors
  - Patient's size and strength
  - Type of abnormal behavior
  - Sex of the patient
  - Mental state of patient
  - Method of restraint

Reasonable Force

- Be aware after a period of combativeness some calm patients may cause unexpected injury to self and others

Reasonable Force

- Avoid acts or physical force that may cause injury to patient
- EMS personnel may use reasonable force to defend against an attack

Medical/Legal Considerations

- Police and medical direction
- Protection against false accusations
- Restraining patients

Assessing Behavioral Emergency Patients

- Identify yourself
- Inform them of what you are doing
- Ask questions in a calm, reassuring voice

Assessing Behavioral Emergency Patients

- Allow patient to tell you what happened
- Show you are listening
- Acknowledge the patient's feelings

Assessing Behavioral Emergency Patients

- Assess mental status
  - Appearance
  - Activity
  - Speech
  - Orientation for time,

Assessment for Potential Violence

- Scene size up
- History
- Posture
- Vocal activity
- Physical activity

Methods to Calm

- Acknowledge that the patient seems upset
- Inform them of what you are doing
- Ask questions in a calm, reassuring voice

Methods to Calm

- Maintain comfortable distance
- Encourage patient to state what is troubling them
- Do not make quick moves
- Respond honestly

Methods to Calm

- Do not threaten, challenge or argue
- Tell the truth, do not lie
- Don’t play along with visual disturbances

Methods to Calm

- Involve trusted family members
- Be prepared to stay at scene a long time
- Always remain with patient

Methods to Calm

- Avoid unnecessary physical contact
- Use good eye contact

Review

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Review

- Recognizing Behavioral Problems
- Assessment of Suicide Risk

Review

- Medical/Legal Considerations
- Principles for Assessing Behavioral Emergency Patients

Review

- Assessment for Potential Violence
- Methods to Calm Behavioral Emergency Patients