REGION I EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
STANDING MEDICAL ORDERS
EMT – Basic

SMO: Behavioral Emergencies

Overview: "Normal" behavior is generally considered to be adaptive behavior that is accepted by society. This idea is also defined by society when the behavior:

- Deviates from society's norms and expectations
- Interferes with well being and ability to function
- Is harmful to the individual or group

A behavior emergency can be defined as a change in mood or behavior that cannot be tolerated by the involved person or others and requires intervention.

INFORMATION NEEDED

__ Significant stessors identified by the patient and/or family
__ Any alcohol or other drugs involved
__ Medical history: trauma, tranquilizers, anticonvulsants, diabetes, other medical problems
__ Any injuries noted to patient
__ Does patient have plans to hurt self or others?

OBJECTIVE FINDINGS

__ Altered mental status
__ Behavioral ranges from hostility and anxiety to withdrawn
__ Search for medical alert bracelet or card
__ Injuries to patient if has self-destructive behavior

TREATMENT

__ Scene safety—STAY ALERT.
__ Contact Resource Hospital, police, and/or Fire Department back-up as appropriate.
__ Identify yourself clearly.
__ Approach patient in a calm and professional manner. Talk to patient alone—request bystanders to wait in another area. Show concern for family members as well. Allow patient to verbalize his problem in his own words. Reassure patient that help is available.
__ Get patient's permission to do your assessment before touching patient.
__ Vital signs.
__ NEVER leave patient alone.
__ Transport female with another non-threatening female bystander or relative if possible.
__ In the case of suicide attempts, be prepared to:

- Treat any injuries
- If drug or poison was ingested, find agent and transport with patient to hospital
- Be ready to assist ventilations if needed. If patient goes into respiratory arrest, follow proper protocol.

__ Transport quickly and quietly.

Documentation of adherence to protocol:

__ Patient's presenting demeanor
__ Reinforcements called and on scene
__ Verbalizations in patient's words using quotations when possible
__ Any more advanced medical interventions that were necessary

PRECAUTIONS AND COMMENTS

- Remember that abnormal emotional behavior could be the result of injuries or disease. Initiate treatment as required. Consider and attempt to evaluate for possible causes of behavioral problems:
  - Hypoxia
  - Hypotension
  - Hypoglycemia
  - Trauma (head injury)
  - Alcohol/ Drug Intoxication or Reaction
  - Stroke/ CVA
  - Post-ictal states/ seizures
  - Electrolyte Imbalances
  - Infections/ fever
  - Dementia (i.e. acute or chronic organic brain syndrome, Alzheimer's disease)
- At all times, EMT's should avoid placing themselves in danger; at times this may mean a delay in the initiation of treatment until the personal safety of the EMT is assured
- If the patient is judged to be either suicidal or incompetent and dangerous to self and others, the treatment and transport should be carried out in the interest of the patient's welfare. If the patient resists, police involvement is necessary and the use of reasonable force may be used to restrain the patient from doing further harm to self or others.

REGION I EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
STANDING MEDICAL ORDERS
EMT – Intermediate, EMT – Paramedic

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__ Get patient's permission to do your assessment before touching patient.
__ Vital signs.
__ NEVER leave patient alone.
__ Transport female with another non-threatening female bystander or relative if possible.

TREATMENT (cont)

__ In the case of suicide attempts be prepared to:
- Treat any injuries
- If drug or poison was ingested, find agent and transport with patient to hospital
- Place on cardiac monitor.
- Be ready to assist ventilations if needed. If patient goes into respiratory arrest, follow proper protocol.
- Consider the use of **Narcan 2mg bolus IV or ETT** if narcotic overdose suspected. Use of Narcan may unmask other illicit drugs such as PCP which could cause the patient to become violent. Use Narcan with caution if suspected polysubstance abuse. Priority is to protect self and other Providers.

__ Transport quickly and quietly.

Documentation of adherence to protocol:

__ Patient's presenting demeanor
__ Reinforcements called and on scene
__ Verbalizations in patient's words using quotations when possible
__ Any more advanced medical interventions that were necessary (O2, intubation, medications)

PRECAUTIONS AND COMMENTS

- Remember that abnormal emotional behavior could be the result of injuries or disease. Initiate treatment as required. Consider and attempt to evaluate for possible causes of behavioral problems:
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  - Hypotension
  - Hypoglycemia
  - Trauma (head injury)
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