

Medical Emergencies: A Practical Guide

EM/ERGE

OCTOBER 2018

Washington
County EMS—
Personnel you
might meet



In the field

- ▶ **First responder**—Typically, the first people on scene will be either three firefighters or one Rescue Technician. They are trained in basic life support, and may begin asking you about your medical history and taking your vital signs. They do not transport people to the hospital.
- ▶ **AEMT/Paramedic:** 911 Ambulances in Washington County are usually staffed by an Advanced EMT and a Paramedic. The Advanced EMT can provide basic care and perform some more advanced skills. The Paramedic can perform many basic and advanced life support procedures. They will be the ones who transport you to the hospital.



In the hospital

- ▶ **Nurse**—Your nurse will be in charge of your care and will often be the person with whom you have the most contact. Nurses may also have assistants working under them who can help provide you with basic needs, such as blankets.
- ▶ **Physician**—The Physician will be the one to diagnose you and create a treatment plan. They may admit you to the hospital if they believe your condition needs to be treated in the hospital, or they may discharge you once you have been stabilized.



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Cuts, scrapes, and bruises



▶ Cuts

- ▶ Rinse cut with water to clean out dirt or debris (possibly wash minor cuts with mild soap), apply Neosporin or antibiotic ointment, cover wound with a clean bandage. Apply a new bandage if it gets wet or does not cover the area well.

▶ Dowshen, S. (Ed.). (2017, April). Dealing With Cuts. Retrieved from <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/bleeding.html>

▶ Scrapes

- ▶ Wash your hands, then remove debris and wash the scrape. Scrapes do not usually bleed profusely, so either wait for bleeding to stop or slow down. Apply Neosporin or antibiotic ointment, cover wound with a clean bandage. Apply a new bandage if it gets wet or does not cover the area well.

▶ Wentworth, G., RN. (2018, July 31). Properly Treating a Scraped Knee. Retrieved from <https://www.healthline.com/health/scraped-knee>



▶ Bruises

- ▶ Wrap the bruise with a cloth and place an ice pack on the cloth. Be sure to not place ice pack directly on the skin. This will reduce swelling if done for 15 minutes or so. Rest the bruised area and if possible, raise the bruised area above your head to prevent a lot of blood settling in the bruised tissue.

▶ Treating a Minor Bruise. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.indigourgentcare.com/what-we-treat/minor-bruise>



Cut: <https://www.wikihow.com/Treat-a-Minor-Cut#/image:Treat-a-Minor-Cut-Step-1-Version-2.jpg>
Scrape: <https://www.cpcmg.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/child-with-scraps-on-elbow-1024x680.jpg>
Bruise: <https://www.dliving.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/internal-bleeding.jpg>

Burns

- ▶ Call 911 if the burned skin is charred, leathery looking, or black. If you cannot feel the burn area, call 911. If the burn leaves blistering skin, do not pop blisters or irritate the area, go to the emergency room.

▶ Thermal Burns Treatment . (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.webmd.com/first-aid/thermal-heat-or-fire-burns-treatment#1>

- ▶ Otherwise:

- ▶ Remove whatever is causing the burn immediately
- ▶ Rinse the burned area with cold water to stop the skin from burning. You can also immerse the skin in cold water until the pain goes away.
- ▶ Cover the burned skin with sterile, non-adhesive (non-sticking) bandage that does NOT shed fibers. Or, if available, use a clean cloth.
- ▶ Do not apply butter or ointments which can cause infection (cream, lotion, oil, cortisone, butter, or egg whites); only use burn ointments like petroleum jelly or aloe vera. Antibiotic ointments might cause allergic reactions and are not necessary, but you can use those if you know how your body will react to it.
- ▶ For pain, take tylenol/motrin.

▶ Minor burns - aftercare: MedlinePlus Medical Encyclopedia. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000662.htm>



Sprains, Strains, and Fractures

- ▶ Remember **RICE** for sprains and strains

- ▶ **Rest**
- ▶ **Ice** (apply ice to the sprain on top of clean cloth)
- ▶ **Compression**
- ▶ **Elevation**

▶ 23rd, 2. M. (n.d.). Expert insights. Retrieved from <https://www.northwell.edu/orthopaedic-institute/specialties/trauma-fractures/expert-insights/difference-between-fractures-strains-sprains>

- ▶ For fractures, call 911. Immediately immobilize and elevate injury. Take care to prevent further harm.
- ▶ See your doctor or call 911 if the injury is really painful or obviously deformed.
- ▶ If you cannot feel or move the injury or anything past the injury (ex. Broken elbow and can't feel hand), call 911 immediately.

▶ Sprains and strains. (2017, October 04). Retrieved from <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/sprains-and-strains/symptoms-causes/yc-20377938>



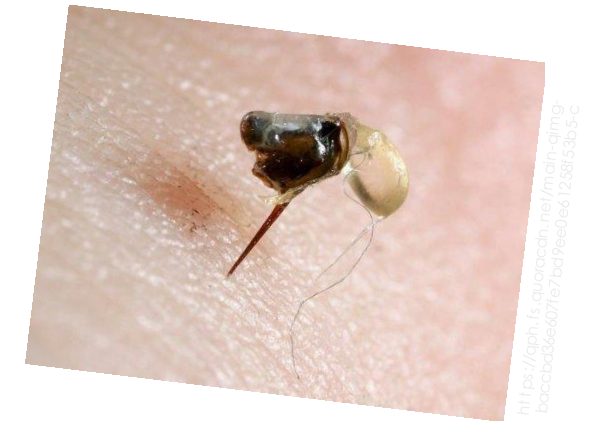
https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&cat=images&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwJf17m-ZzeAnUQtIMKH1QwDcwQjR68AgBEAJ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.wvebmd.com%2Fpain-management%2Fsprains-strains-17%2Fvideo-how-to-treat-minor-sprains&psig=AOvVawLUR6A5ut-OG39_RUmf6855usth154039743838759

Insect Bites and Stings

- ▶ Normal reactions to a sting:
 - ▶ Burning sensation or sharp pain
 - ▶ Redness and swelling
 - ▶ Itching or irritation
- ▶ If your skin breaks out everywhere, you have trouble breathing, experience nausea or vomiting, dizziness, or other serious conditions, go to the ER or call 911 immediately if by yourself.
- ▶ Otherwise, scrape stinger off with a credit card or similar item, apply an ice pack on top of cloth to reduce swelling and pain, rub anti-sting ointment on site, and cover with a Band-Aid.

▶ Roth, E. (2017, June 28). Wasp Stings: Reaction Symptoms and Treatment (D. Weatherspoon PhD, RN, CRNA, Ed.). Retrieved from <https://www.healthline.com/health/wasp-sting>

▶ Roth, E. (2017, June 28). Wasp Stings: Reaction Symptoms and Treatment (D. Weatherspoon PhD, RN, CRNA, Ed.). Retrieved from <https://www.healthline.com/health/wasp-sting>



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Heart Attack and Stroke Symptoms

Heart Attack

- ▶ Chest pain
- ▶ Discomfort
- ▶ Shortness of breath
- ▶ Nausea/Vomiting
- ▶ Back or Jaw Pain
- ▶ Call 911 if you or others are experiencing these symptoms

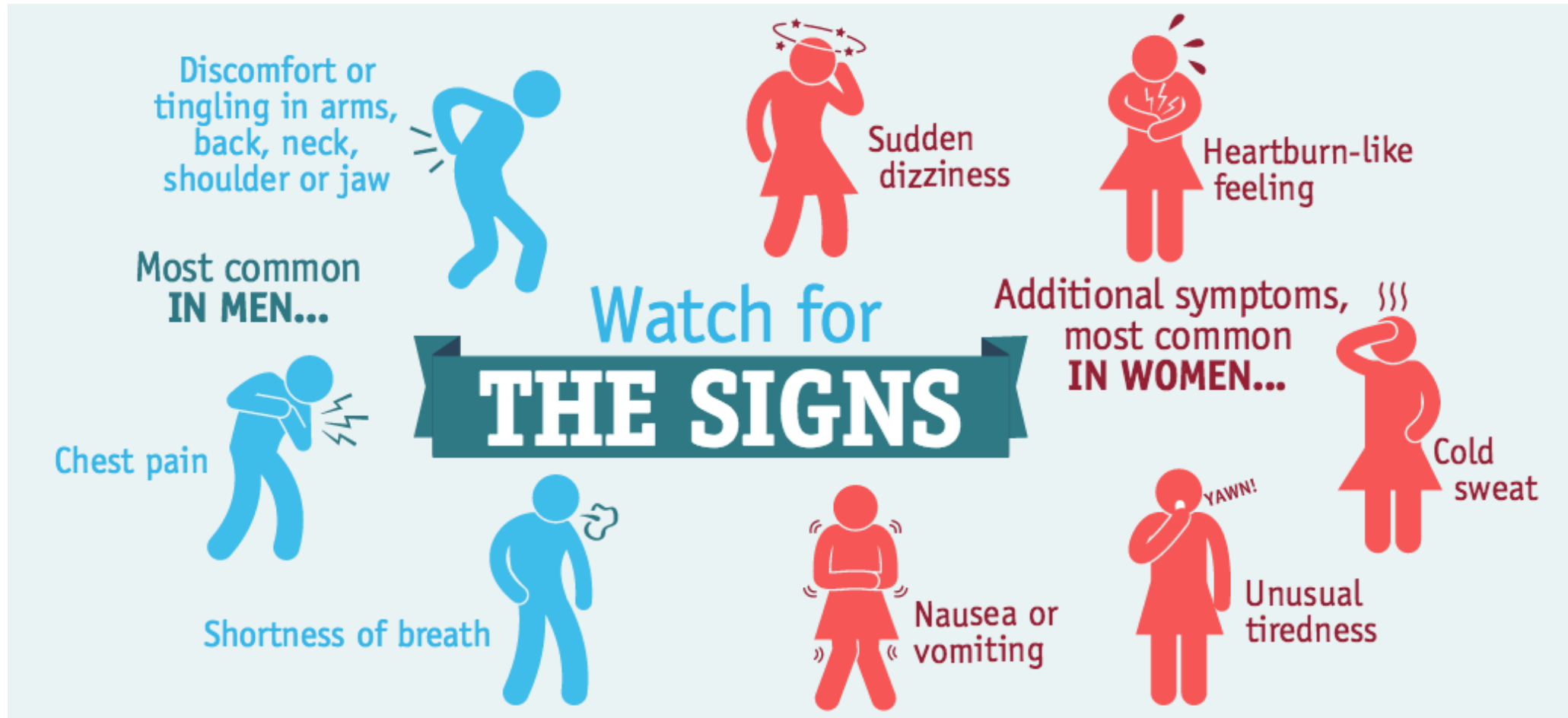
▶ <https://g.co/kg/GbpgPk>

Stroke

- ▶ Trouble walking
- ▶ Trouble speaking and understanding
- ▶ Paralysis or numbness of face, arm, leg
- ▶ Difficulty seeing in one or both eyes
- ▶ Difficulty swallowing, headache, confusion
- ▶ FAST checklist + signs in other people
- ▶ Call 911 if you or others are experiencing these symptoms

▶ <https://g.co/kg/1YPC?n>

Most Common Heart Attack Symptoms By Sex



FAST Test for Strokes

STROKE IS AN EMERGENCY

ACT FAST CALL 911

Any one of these signs could mean a stroke:



FACE

Look for an uneven smile.



ARM

Check if one arm is weak.



SPEECH

Listen for slurred speech.



TIME

Call 911 right away.

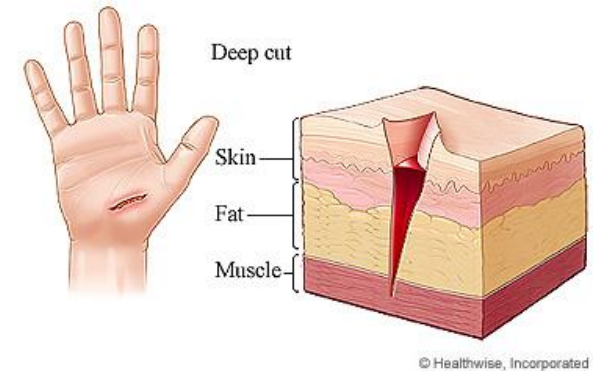
Courtesy of Aspirus and Mercy EMS

Visit StrokeCall911.com to learn about how you can build awareness in our community.



When to go to the ER

- ▶ For adults and children—a temperature above 103 or below 95. Normal temperature range is around 98.6°F.
- ▶ Wheezing, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing (signs of allergic reaction, heart attack, etc.)
- ▶ Injuries: broken bones, dislocations, deep cuts, severe burns
- ▶ Excessive blood loss
- ▶ Fainting or dizziness, seizures
- ▶ Heat stroke—when you stop sweating, you need to go to the ER
- ▶ Frostbite
- ▶ Concussion—vomiting, dizziness, confusion





911

Police • Fire • Medical

EMERGENCY

When To Call 911

- ▶ Stop A Crime! Report A Fire! Save A Life!
- ▶ Call 911 any time that there is an emergency
- ▶ If there is any doubt, call and a dispatcher will guide you
- ▶ Is the condition life or limb threatening?
- ▶ Could the condition worsen quickly on the way to the hospital?
- ▶ If you move the victim, will it cause further injury?
- ▶ Does the person need skills or equipment that paramedics or EMT's have/carry right away?
- ▶ Would distance or traffic cause a delay in getting the person to the hospital?

<http://www.emergencycareforyou.org/emergency-101/when-to-call-911/#sm.00000xt6g8r8audbqfa16qllz6mlb>

When You Call 911

EVERY COUNTY IS DIFFERENT, they all have different protocols and different EMD Companies

- ▶ 911 _____ County, what is the **address** of your emergency?
- ▶ What is your **name**?
- ▶ What is the **number** you are calling me from?
- ▶ Okay, tell me **exactly** what happened?
- ▶ Are you **with** the patient **now**?
- ▶ How **many** people are **hurt/sick**?
- ▶ How **old** is the patient?
- ▶ Are they **awake**/alert/conscious?
- ▶ Are they **breathing**?

When You Call 911

EXAMPLE CHEST PAIN CALL

- ▶ Is (s)he **completely alert**?
- ▶ Is (s)he **breathing normally**?
 - ▶ If **NO**, does (s)he have **difficulty** speaking between breaths?
- ▶ Is (s)he **changing color**?
 - ▶ If **YES**, **describe** the color change
- ▶ Is (s)he **clammy** (cold sweats)?
- ▶ Has (s)he ever had a **heart attack** or **angina** (heart pains)?
- ▶ Did (s)he take any **drugs** or **medications** in the **past 12 hours**?

When You Call 911

- ▶ "Stay on the line and I'll tell you exactly what to do next"
- ▶ Post-dispatch instructions:
 - ▶ Please put away any pets
 - ▶ Gather any medications
 - ▶ Unlock your door
 - ▶ Have someone waves down the responders
- ▶ If they are stable: "I want you to watch him/her very closely. If (s)he vomits quickly turn her on him/her side. If (s)he get worse in any way call us back immediately for further instructions"
- ▶ If they are unstable: "I'm going to stay on the line with you for as long as I can"

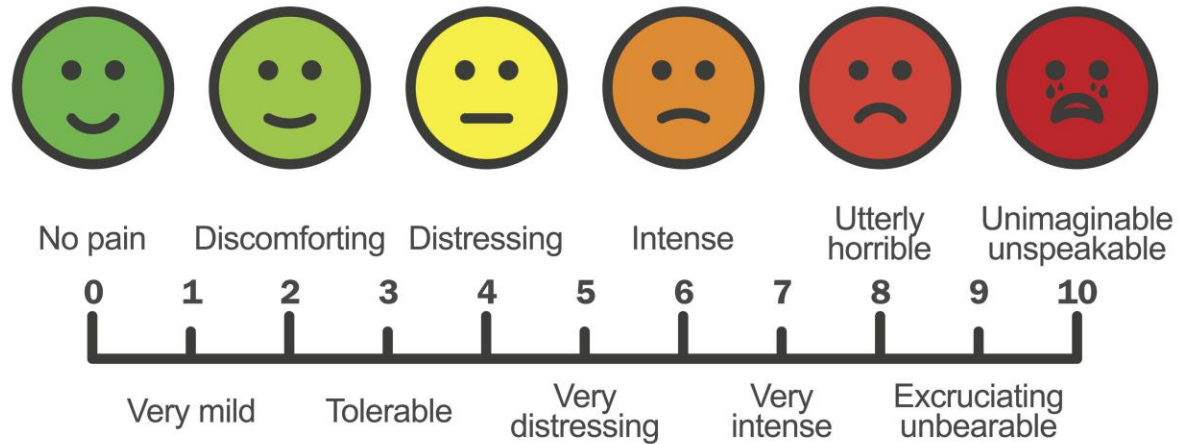
Interacting with an EMT

The EMT that responds to the call is going to have a lot of questions, and many of them will be similar to those asked by the 911 telecommunicator.

- ▶ You will be asked about signs and symptoms, allergies, medications, past medical history, the last time you ate, and what happened leading up to you calling
- ▶ They will perform a physical assessment
- ▶ They will take vital signs
- ▶ Determine and provide treatment



Pain Scale



Acute Pain- sudden and short term

Chronic Pain- long term

Ways to Describe Pain

▶ **OPQRST**

- ▶ **O**- Onset: when it began
- ▶ **P**- Provocation: what caused it
- ▶ **Q**- Quality: what describes it
- ▶ **R**- Radiation: where it hurts
- ▶ **S**- Severity: how bad it hurts
- ▶ **T**- Time: how often does it hurt

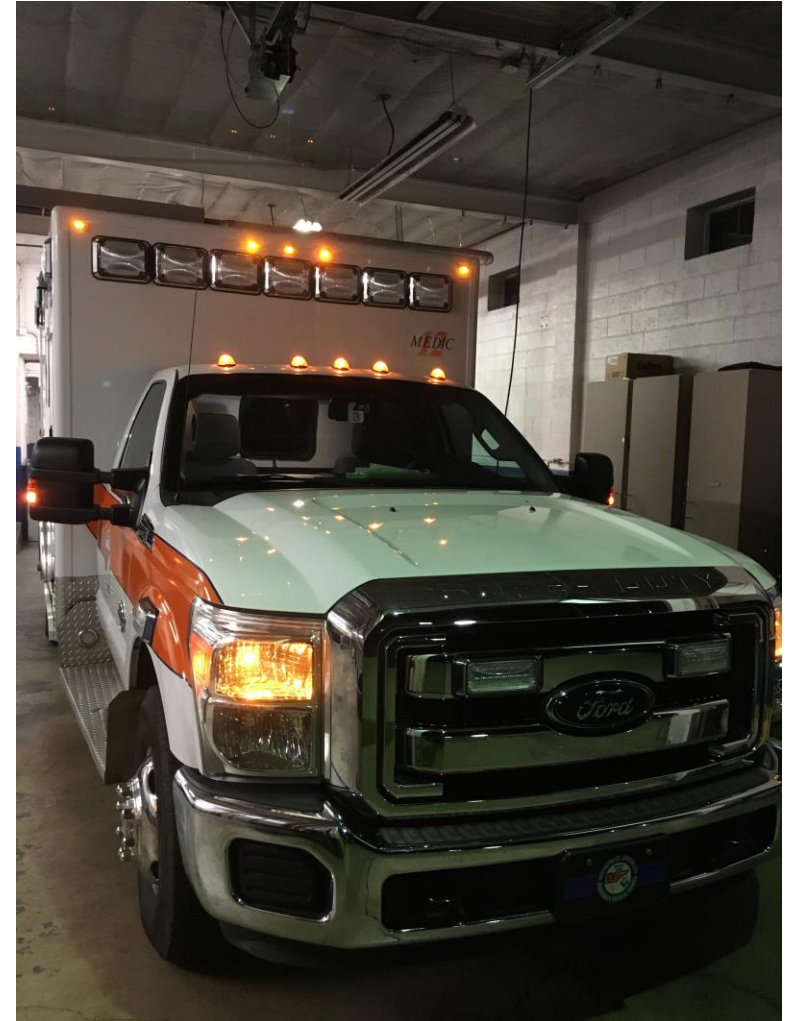
What To Bring With You

- ▶ Official form of identification
- ▶ Insurance information
- ▶ Contact information
- ▶ Up-to-date medication list
 - ▶ Include allergies, medical history, and if any medications are used for atypical reasons



Medical IDs

Inside the Ambulance



The Stretcher



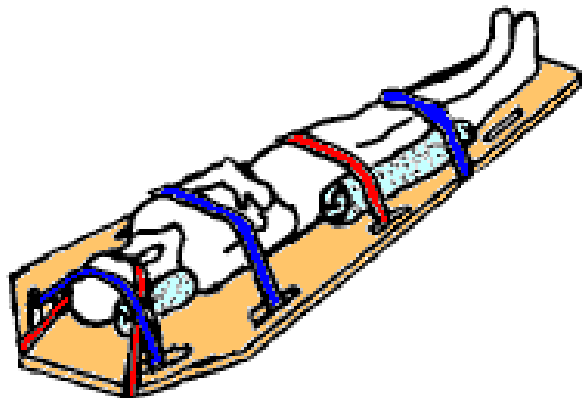
- ▶ The stretcher is where you will ride while you are in the ambulance. You can be placed in a seated, semi-reclined, or flat position. There is one seatbelt that goes across your lap, one that goes across your legs, and sometimes a harness that goes across your chest.

Cervical Collar (C-collar)



- ▶ The cervical collar, or c-collar, is used when the EMTs suspect that you may have injured your neck. It goes around your neck and sits on top of your shoulders while holding your chin up. The c-collar is pretty uncomfortable, but not painful. Although you may still be able to move your neck slightly while wearing it, it is important that you keep your head as still as possible, because that will help prevent more damage to your cervical spine.

Long Spine Board



The long spine board is used to stabilize a patient if a spinal injury is suspected. If you are put on the long spine board, you will be strapped in with 1 strap across your chest, 1 across your hips, and 1 across your legs. You will also have blocks or rolled towels put on either side of your head and held in place with straps across your forehead and chin. You may also have to wear a C-collar. Being on the long spine board can be uncomfortable, but should not be painful. If the long spine board is making your pain worse, let the EMT know.

Seats



The EMT will usually sit either in the "Captain's Chair" at your head, or the bench next to you. This will allow the EMT to talk to you and perform medical procedures.

Airway devices



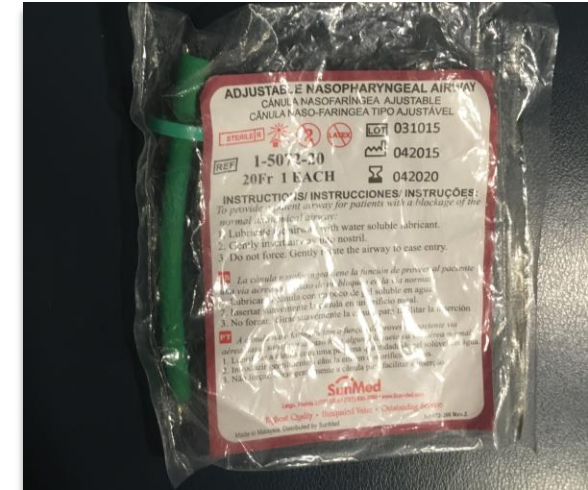
Nasal Cannula

The two prongs blow oxygen into your nostrils, allowing you to breathe a higher concentration of oxygen.



Non-Rebreather

This goes over your nose and mouth, and lets you breathe almost entirely oxygen.



NPA

The NPA goes into one of your nostrils and helps to keep your airway open.

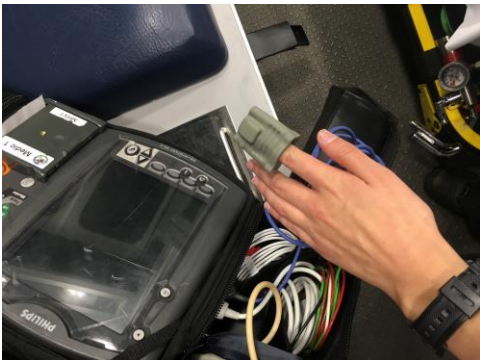
How we take your vital signs



Stethoscope and manual blood pressure cuff



EKG electrode



Pulse oximeter



Automatic blood pressure cuff

- ▶ We use the blood pressure cuff and stethoscope to monitor your blood pressure, and the pulse oximeter to monitor your heart rate and the amount of oxygen in your blood. The pulse oximeter slips over your finger like a glove. We also may take an EKG, where we stick electrodes on your body to monitor your heart beat.

Other things in the ambulance

Bleeding control
supplies



Airway supplies



Blankets and towels



Other things in the ambulance

IV kit



Endotracheal tubes



Oxygen hookup
and radio



For more information,
contact us:
emergetsu@gmail.com

