

Patient Assessment in the Back Country

4 Surveys:

- 1) Scene Survey
- 2) Primary Survey
- 3) Secondary Survey
- 4) On-Going Survey

- Scene Survey:

- i. Make sure the scene is safe for you and the victim
- ii. Don't make yourself a second victim
- iii. Survey any potential dangers (snakes, falling rocks.....)
- iv. How many victims?
- v. Try to determine:
 - a. MOI - Mechanism of Injury
 - b. NOI - Nature of Illness

- Primary Survey (MARCH Protocol)

M - Massive Hemorrhage

- a. Look for Life-Threatening External Bleeding and control it.
- b. Look for Internal Bleeding (person will need to be evacuated).
- c. Clothing may need to be removed to check for bleeding.
- d. Be careful cutting off clothing in cold environments as you may be destroying their personal shelter.
- e. Check from head to toe (Blood Sweep).
- f. Control bleeding with: Direct pressure, Tourniquet, Wound Packing.

A - Airway w/C-Spine

- a. Open the airway with the head tip/chin lift or Jaw Thrust (if spine injured).
- b. Keep the head aligned with the spine if spinal injury suspected.

R - Respiration

- a. Assess Breathing.
- b. Treat Chest Injuries.

C - Circulation

- a. Check Pulse and Blood Flow. (No Pulse / No Breathing - Start CPR)

H - Hypothermia / Hyperthermia and Hike vs. Helicopter.

- a. Keep the victim from getting too cold or too hot.
- b. Decide if the person needs to be quickly evacuated or if they can hike out or if they can finish their expedition.

The reason they changed ABCDE to MARCH is because ABCDE ignores Life-Threatening bleeding.

- **Secondary Survey:** (SAMPLE History of the patient) A more Focused Exam:

S - Symptoms and Subjective

- a. sensations, feelings, or complaints that only the patient can experience and describe.

A - Allergies

M - Medications

P - Prior Medical History

L - Last Oral Intake

E - Events Leading up to illness or injury

- a. This is last because information given prior (such as medications) could indicate that the fall they just had might have been triggered from another medical issue such as dizziness from low blood sugar. Now you know to contend not only with the fall issue but also the medical issue that caused the fall.

Physical Examination part of the secondary survey:

D - Deformities

C - Contusions

A - Abrasions

P - Penetrations

B - Burns

T - Tenderness

L - Lacerations

S - Swelling

- **On-Going Survey:**

- a. Continually evaluating the patient

- b. Are they getting better or worse?

- c. AVPU Scale

A - Alert (alert and oriented to “person, place, time, events”) “A+O x4”

V - Verbal (responds only to verbal stimuli

P - Pain (responds only to painful stimuli

U - Unresponsive

- Altered Mental Status Check

A - Allergies / Altitude

E - Epilepsy / Environment

I - Infection

O - Overdose

U - Underdose

T - Trauma / Toxins (possibly plants)

I - Insulin

P - Psychological

S - Stroke

- Pain Questions:

C - Character

O - Onset

L - Location

D - Duration

E - Exacerbation

R - Radiation

R - Relief

OR

O - Onset

P - Provocation

Q - Quality

R - Radiation

S - Severity

T - Time

Notes:

Drowning victims - Do two rescue breaths prior to compressions

Document your actions with a SOAP Note:

S - Subjective (what the patient tells you)

O - Objective (what you are seeing)

A - Assessment

P - Plan