

# NON-ACCIDENTAL TRAUMA/ABUSE

## UPDATED 1/2024

### ALL PROVIDERS

- Scene and patient management
  - Contact Law Enforcement if someone on scene is a threat to themselves or others.
  - Separate any possible assailants, including parents, from the patient.
  - Remove the patient from the stressful environment and remove any possible weapons.
  - Non-accidental trauma: Any act of commission or omission that results in harm to a person's physical, developmental, or emotional state.
- Focused history and physical exam
  - Blood glucose, temperature and oxygen saturation assessment.
  - Always consider the possibility of abuse when evaluating any medical condition or trauma.
- Continuous cardiac monitor, ETCO<sub>2</sub>, and pulse oximetry
- Treatment Plan**
  - Suspect: Look for suspicious circumstances or actions from patient or caregiver
    - Listen to and document the circumstances of the event.
    - Evaluate the environment in which you find the patient.
  - Protect: Be the patient advocate
    - Make all efforts to remove the patient from the situation.
  - Respect: Communicate appropriately with family
    - Avoid confrontation with caregivers.
    - Be nonjudgmental and avoid accusations.
    - Consider law enforcement assistance.
  - Collect: Provide good documentation of the incident.
    - Document using direct quotation when possible. Describe the scene rather than interpret it. Example: "garbage on floor, spoiled food on counter" is more helpful than "dirty apartment."
    - Document objectively without speculation.
    - HIPAA-compliant photography may be considered for documentation.
  - Report: You have the responsibility to report suspected child or elder abuse and neglect **to law enforcement or the Division of Family Services**. 1-855-323-DCFS (3237)
- Key Considerations**
  - Non-accidental trauma, abuse, or neglect can occur in patients of any age and in all ethnic and socio-economic groups.
  - TEN-4 Rule. For children 4 and younger bruising to the Torso, around the Ears or the Neck needs to be reported. Additionally, any bruising in a baby not yet pulling up or taking steps is highly suspicious.
  - Risk factors: children under the age of 5, the elderly, drug or alcohol abuse, and a history of domestic violence.
  - In children under two, the most common form of child abuse is **Abusive Head Injury (AHI)**. Mortality of AHI is 25%.
  - Do not directly engage a hostile patient, parent, assailant or perpetrator. If the situation becomes unsafe for EMS personnel, call for police assistance.
  - If anxious or agitated, attempt non-pharmacological options to calm a patient. **Consider chemical sedation per the Behavioral Emergencies Guideline.**