

## Chapter 19 – Behavioral Emergencies Presentation Notes

### Myth and Reality

- \_\_\_\_\_ has symptoms of mental illness problems at \_\_\_\_\_.
- Only a \_\_\_\_\_ of mental health patients are \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_ people may have symptoms occasionally.

### Defining Behavioral Emergencies

- \_\_\_\_\_
- What you can see of a person's \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_ and his or her \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Any \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ that \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_ of daily living or that becomes \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_\_
- A \_\_\_\_\_, not an \_\_\_\_\_ incident

### Causes of Behavioral Emergencies

- \_\_\_\_\_
- Caused by \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Cannot be traced to \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ of the brain

### Causes of Organic Brain Syndrome

- \_\_\_\_\_
- Recent \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ blood glucose
- \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ blood flow to the \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_

## Safety Guidelines

- Be prepared to \_\_\_\_\_.
- Have a \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_ yourself.
- Be \_\_\_\_\_.
- Be \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_ the scene.
- \_\_\_\_\_ with patient.

## You are the Provider

- You and your partner are dispatched for an attempted suicide.
- You arrive to a young woman screaming for you to help her friend who is threatening to kill herself.
- What additional information do you need?
- Should you enter this residence prior to obtaining law enforcement assistance?

## Scene Size-up

- \_\_\_\_\_ is most important. Consider calling appropriate resources if needed.
- Take \_\_\_\_\_ precautions at all times.
- \_\_\_\_\_.

## You are the Provider

- The friend tells you that the patient does not have any kind of weapon.
- Your partner radios for law enforcement. You find a girl in her early teens sitting on the couch sobbing.
- She is conscious, alert, and oriented. Breathing labored, 26 breaths/min.
- Both parents are out of town. She is staying alone until tomorrow afternoon.
- Her boyfriend called a short time ago and told her that he no longer wanted to be with her. She begins crying and saying that she does not want to live.
- Based on your initial assessment, is this patient a priority patient?

## Initial Assessment

- \_\_\_\_\_ from the \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_ you are there.
- Be \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- Provide \_\_\_\_\_.
- Transport to appropriate facility based on condition.

## You are the Provider

•You calmly explain to the patient that you need to ask some questions and examine her to get her the help she needs.

•She allows you to obtain baseline vital signs.

–Breathing 20 breaths/min

–Skin is pink, warm, and dry

–Pulse 88 beats/min

–No obvious bleeding

–BP 120/82 mm Hg

•She has no known allergies and takes birth control pills daily but no other medication. She attempted suicide last year by taking an entire bottle of her mom's diazepam (Valium).

•What is your next step? \_\_\_\_\_

## Focused History and Physical Exam

•If \_\_\_\_\_, do rapid exam for \_\_\_\_\_.

•Assess \_\_\_\_\_ areas as contributors:

–Is patient's \_\_\_\_\_ functioning \_\_\_\_\_?

–Are \_\_\_\_\_ or other drugs or \_\_\_\_\_ a factor?

–Are \_\_\_\_\_ circumstances, \_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_\_ involved?

•Use \_\_\_\_\_: \_\_\_\_\_ what the patient has said in \_\_\_\_\_ to help patient expand thoughts.

## Focused Physical Exam

•Use \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ to help make determination.

•\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, blushing may be indicators.

•Look at \_\_\_\_\_.

•\_\_\_\_\_ are stressed

•\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ may be \_\_\_\_\_.

## Interventions

•Be \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

•Intervene only to \_\_\_\_\_ transport.

## **You are the Provider**

- She states that although she has not done anything to injure herself today, she wants to kill herself and will attempt to do so if she gets a chance.
- Law enforcement arrives. Your patient becomes hysterical. She runs into the bathroom, slamming the door.
- She refuses to open the door. Afraid of what she may do to herself, the police officer breaks the door down and restrains her.
- Should EMS participate in patient restraint?

## **Detailed Physical Exam**

- Rarely called for

## **Ongoing Assessment**

- Never let your \_\_\_\_\_ down.
- Use \_\_\_\_\_ personnel with transport if available.
- Give advance warning to hospital.
- Can involve legal matters; \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- Be \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ use.

## **Suicide**

- Depression is the single most significant factor that contributes to suicide.
- An attempted suicide is a cry for help.
- Immediate intervention is necessary.
- Suicidal patients will usually exhibit warning signs.

## **Critical Warning Signs of Suicide**

- Does the patient have an air of tearfulness, sadness, deep despair, or hopelessness?
- Does the patient avoid eye contact, speak slowly, or project a sense of vacancy?
- Does the patient seem unable to talk about the future?
- Is there any suggestion of suicide?
- Does the patient have any specific plans relating to death?

## **Additional Risk Factors for Suicide**

- Are there any unsafe objects in the patient's hands or nearby?
- Is the environment unsafe?
- Is there evidence of self-destructive behavior?
- Keep in mind the suicidal patient may be homicidal as well.

## **Medicolegal Considerations**

- Mental incapacity may take many forms.
- Once a patient has been determined to have an impaired mental capacity, you must decide if care is needed.
- Do not leave the patient alone.
- Obtain help from law enforcement as necessary.

## **Consent**

- When a patient is not mentally competent, the law assumes that there is implied consent.
- The matter is not always clear-cut with psychiatric emergencies.
- If you are not sure about the situation, request law enforcement assistance.

## **Limited Legal Authority**

- As an EMT-B, you have limited legal authority to require or force a patient to undergo care.
- Police may put a patient in protective custody to allow you to provide care.
- Know your local laws and protocols.

## **Restraints**

- You cannot restrain a patient unless it is an emergency.
- Transport a disturbed patient without restraints if possible.
- If you must restrain the patient, use only reasonable force.
- Law enforcement personnel should be involved.

## **Potentially Violent Patients**

- Use a list of risk factors to assess the level of danger:
  - Past history
  - Posture
  - Scene
  - Vocal activity
  - Physical activity

## **Other Factors to Consider for Potential Violence**

- Poor impulse control
- History of uncontrollable temper
- Low socioeconomic status

- Substance abuse
- Depression
- Functional disorders