



Part IV:

Patient Assessment

EMT Curriculum Correlation Guide

Patient Assessment

EMT Course Topic	EMT Review Audio Lectures App	Other Resources
Scene Size-up	<p>Each segment is like an insightful lecture. If you don't have this app for your class, learn more at http://bit.ly/LCReady-Audio</p>	
Primary Assessment	Primary Assessment Audio	<p>Patient Assessment Flowchart & Video Unique Patient Signs Case Study (Article)</p>
History & Vital Signs		
Secondary Assessment	Secondary Assessment Audio	<p>Patient Assessment Flowchart & Video</p>
Reassessment		
Communication & Documentation		
Assessment Overview		<p>Patient Assessment study cards and review questions in the EMT Review Plus App.</p>

EMT Discussion Board Questions

Scene Size-up

Scene size-up discussion (may be used individually or as an A/B in the same discussion)

You are returning to the station after a call when you come upon a two-vehicle collision. One of the cars is on fire. The flames are moving from under the hood to under the dashboard in the passenger compartment. There is thick smoke inside the car. A woman is frantic and screaming that she can't get her baby out of the car seat because the straps are stuck. What do you do?

What if you were in your ambulance and came upon a domestic dispute where a man was striking a woman on a street corner? She was knocked to the ground and he is now kicking her? What would you do? Bystanders are screaming for you to do something.

This discussion is about risk. You will get different responses from different people about each of the two scenarios. Few will be truly right or wrong. Focus on questions like, "How could you minimize the risk to yourself while still helping? What do you think could happen to you? Could some actions make the situation worse?"

Primary Assessment

The National Registry of EMTs considers it a "critical criterion" (grounds for failure of the practical station) if you do any part of the secondary assessment before completing the primary assessment. Why do you think this is? Give one example of where doing this may hurt a patient.

Emphasize that the primary assessment is about life threats. They must be addressed before other assessments or procedures are done. Remind your students that not everyone will have life threats and for those patients, the primary assessment will go relatively quickly. It may be interesting to ask about patients with multiple threats (need suction and severe bleeding). How would they determine priorities?

Give examples if necessary, of how not doing the primary assessment first could cause harm. One example is how respiratory failure could be missed, making the patient increasingly hypoxic and lead to respiratory arrest.

EMT Discussion Board Questions

History and Vital Signs

A fellow student in class is having trouble hearing the pulse sounds while taking a blood pressure. List three things you could tell them to help with the problem.

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You are taking a blood pressure during your field ride time for EMT class. You hear the beats but aren't quite sure where they started to get the systolic reading. You think it was about 130 mmHg. You are confident that the diastolic pressure was 74 mmHg. What should you do? Why?

If a student isn't sure about the BP, they should take it again on the other arm. Never guess. Never use the bumping of the needle on the gauge to determine the BP.

Communication and Documentation

You are called to a teenage female with lower quadrant abdominal pain. You know that you have to ask about pregnancy, birth control use, and menstruation but you feel a bit uneasy about doing so. The patient's father is present in the room. How would you ask about those personal things? Will the father being in the room help or hinder the situation?

This answer will depend on the student's life experience and comfort levels. Generally, asking the questions when the father isn't present will result in more reliable answers. Use common terms (not always complex clinical terms) and be sincere when you ask about any issues like sex, pregnancy, menstruation, and other topics. Many patients will answer them without issue—the issue sometimes resides with the EMT!

EMT Discussion Board Questions

Assessment Overview

A “pertinent negative” is something you need to know, even if the answer is no. For example, in a patient with chest discomfort, you must ask whether they have breathing difficulty. List two pertinent negatives (things you must know the answer to) for each of the complaints listed below.

- Chest discomfort
- Abdominal pain
- Syncopal episode

Some examples for the three patient presentations are below. There are many potential answers that may be correct. This is to help get students thinking independently. If they get stuck, refer them to the body system exams concept to learn what to assess for.

- Chest discomfort – the student should ask about respiratory distress, if the pain radiates to the neck, jaw, or shoulder, if it hurts worse when they take a deep breath, and others.
- Abdominal pain – basically the student needs to know what goes in (oral intake), what comes out and when (vomiting, urination, bowel movements), and what those things look and smell like. Was there any blood in vomit or feces?
- Syncopal episode – did the patient have any chest pain or palpitations before the episode? Did the patient have any other sensations (dizziness, etc.) before the episode?

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About the resources in this curriculum guide:



EMT Audio Lecture apps

We have two audio lecture series (EMT and AEMT) as well as a pathophysiology audio series for EMTs and AEMTs. These can help students get the equivalent of an insightful lecture or a solid review to supplement coursework. For details and pricing, visit <http://bit.ly/LCReady-Audio>



EMT Review Plus app

The EMT Review Plus app contains over 1,100 items including study cards, review questions and NREMT-style practice exams, with a rationale for every answer. Critical thinking, medical terminology and pathophysiology are included. For details and pricing, visit <https://bit.ly/EMT-Review-App>



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