

# Southern Illinois Regional EMS System

## EE-23 BEHAVIORAL EMERGENCIES

Behavioral episodes may range from despondent and withdrawn behavior to aggressive and violent behavior. Behavioral changes may be a symptom of a number of medical conditions including head injury, brain tumor, substance abuse, metabolic disorders, stress and psychiatric disorders. Patient assessment and evaluation of the situation is crucial in differentiating medical intervention needs from psychological support needs.

### BLS:

- BLS Care should be directed at conducting a thorough patient assessment, initiating routine patient care to assure that the patient has a patent airway, is breathing and has a perfusing pulse as well as assuring personal safety and preparing the patient for or providing transport.
  - Patient assessment and initial medical care
  - Maintain scene safety and request law enforcement if needed
  - Determine if the patient is a threat to self or others
  - Contact Medical Control as early as possible if restraints are needed
  - Transport

### ALS/ILS:

- ALS/ILS Care should be directed at continuing or establishing patient care, conducting a thorough patient assessment, ensuring personal safety and preparing the patient for or providing patient transport.
  - Render initial care in accordance with the Routine Patient Care Protocol.
  - Maintain control of the scene and request law enforcement if needed.
  - Determine if the patient is a threat to self or others.
  - Contact Medical Control as early as possible:
    - If restraints are needed
    - If sedation is needed
  - Transport

### CRITICAL THINKING ELEMENTS:

- Document the patient's behavior, statements, actions and surroundings.
- Verbally attempt to calm and/or re-orient the patient to reality.
  - DO NOT PARTICIPATE in a patient's delusions or hallucinations.
- If restraints are used, thoroughly document the reasons for applying restraints:
  - Time of application
  - Condition of the patient before and after the application
  - Method of restraint and any law enforcement involvement
    - Including any use of law enforcement equipment
  - Time Medical Control was contacted
- Consult Medical Control in ALL instances where a refusal of transport is being considered if the patient is to be restrained.
- Consider medical etiologies of apparent behavioral disorders such as hypoxia, stroke/head injury, substance abuse/overdose, and hypoglycemia.
  - Treat according to the appropriate protocol