



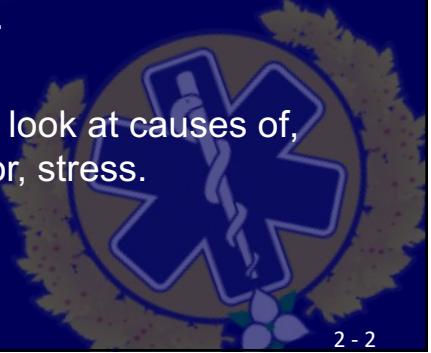
Emergency Medical Responder

## THE WELLBEING OF AN EMR



Stress impacts all of us, particularly in EMS because of shift work, inadequate sustenance, a stressful job environment, dealing with stressful calls, and critical incidents.

In this presentation we will look at causes of, and coping mechanisms for, stress.



2 - 2



We will consider the 5 stages of the grieving process as well as dealing with the dying patient. Knowledge of what to expect can assist with your own stress levels.

We will also look at lifestyle factors, disease transmission, personal protective equipment, and scene safety. All of these are important for the well being of you, the EMR.

2 - 3



### Recognize the Signs of Stress

Irritability

Inability to concentrate

Difficulty sleeping

Loss of appetite

Anxiety

Inability to make decisions

Loss of interest in sexual activity

Desire to be left alone

Loss of interest in work

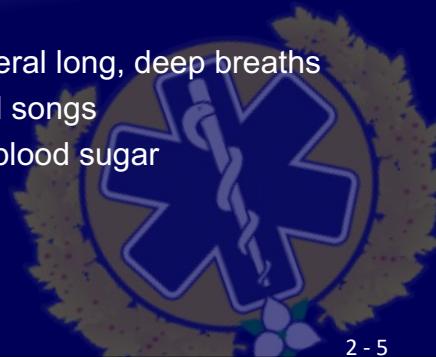
Guilt

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## How to Deal with Stress

- Remind yourself that the patient desperately needs you and your skills
- Close your eyes and take several long, deep breaths
- Hum quietly and sing peaceful songs
- Eat properly to maintain your blood sugar



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## Lifestyle Changes to Avoid Stress

- Cut caffeine, sugar, and alcohol
- Avoid fatty foods
- Avoid self medicating
- Exercise more often
- Learn to relax
- Pray
- Maintain balance in your life

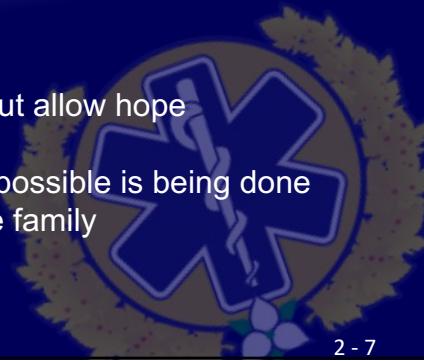


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## Dealing with a Dying Patient

- Maintain the patient's dignity
- Show respect to the patient
- Communicate
- Allow family members to vent
- Listen with empathy
- Don't give false assurances, but allow hope
- Use a gentle tone of voice
- Assure patient that everything possible is being done
- Do what you can to comfort the family



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## The Grieving Process Has Five Stages

- 1) Denial
- 2) Anger
- 3) Bargaining
- 4) Depression
- 5) Acceptance



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## Strategies for Managing Critical Incident Stress

- 1) Pre-incident stress education
- 2) On-scene peer support
- 3) One-on-one support
- 4) Follow-up services
- 5) Spouse and Family support
- 6) Community outreach programs
- 7) Other general health and welfare initiatives



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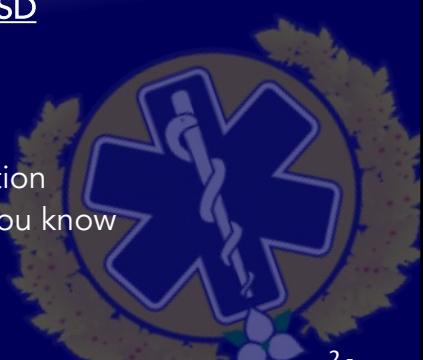


## Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD)

- Defusing
- Debriefing

## Incidents Potentially Requiring CISD

- LODD death or serious injury
- Multi-casualty incident
- EMS worker suicide
- Event attracting media attention
- Injury or death of someone you know
- Any disaster



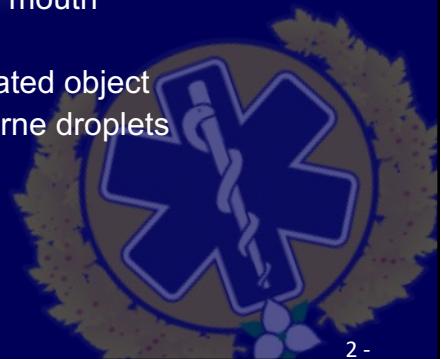
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## Disease Transmission

**Direct** -blood to blood contact  
Open wounds, exposed tissues, mucous membranes of eyes or mouth

**Indirect** -by way of a contaminated object  
Needles, inhaled airborne droplets



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## Diseases of Concern

Hepatitis B & C  
Tuberculosis  
Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome  
SARS  
H1N1  
Others?



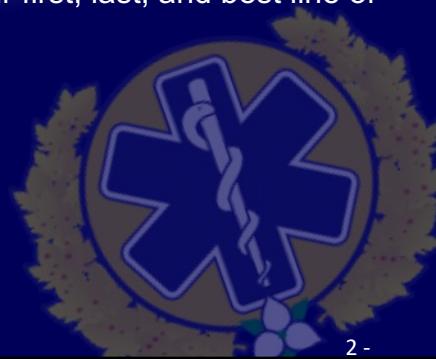
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## Handwashing

Wash your hands well and often.

Keeping clean hands can be your first, last, and best line of defence.



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## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Eye protection
- Gloves
- Gowns
- Masks



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## Immunizations

- 1) Tetanus prophylaxis (every 10 years)
- 2) Hepatitis B vaccine
- 3) Influenza vaccine
- 4) Polio vaccine
- 5) Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine



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## If the scene is unsafe, make it safe before you enter!

Decide whether the scene is safe to approach the patient. Look for:

- 1) MVA or airplane crashes
- 2) Presence of toxic substances
- 3) Crime scenes
- 4) Presence of weapon of any kind
- 5) Possible drug or alcohol use
- 6) Arguing, threats, violent behaviour, broken glass, overturned furniture
- 7) Unstable surfaces like water or ice



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