



CHEST INJURIES



Escambia County, Florida - ALS/BLS Medical Protocol

This protocol covers both blunt and penetrating chest trauma and should be part of initial resuscitation if breathing is compromised.

Supportive Care

1. [Trauma Supportive Care Protocol](#).
2. Penetrating injuries to the chest or upper back should be covered immediately with an occlusive dressing (e.g. Vaseline gauze).
3. Do not attempt to remove an impaled object (stabilize with bulky dressing, etc.). If impaled object is very large or unwieldy, attempt to cut object to no less than six inches from chest.

ALS Level 1

4. For tension-pneumothorax, [decompress chest on affected side](#).
5. For massive flail chest with severe respiratory compromise, [intubate and assist ventilations](#). If flail chest does not cause severe respiratory compromise, stabilize externally using ipsilateral arm in sling and swathe.
6. For traumatic asphyxia, establish two large bore IVs. If crushing object is still on patient, infuse a minimum of 1 liter of fluid before attempting to lift object off of patient.

ALS Level 2 (*Physician Authorization Required*)

None



Approved: 10/01/2011
Version: 3.1

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