#### **Module 7**

Spine and Head Injuries

#### Injuries to the Spine

- You must assume that accident victims with weakness or numbness in their arms or legs have spinal injuries
- Do not move patients with suspected spinal injuries
- All unconscious accident victims should be treated as if they have spinal injuries
- check all conscious victims for spinal injuries

### The severity of the injury increases the higher the location on the spinal cord..

<u>Injury</u>	Location	<u>Problem</u>
<ul><li>Mid-Neck</li></ul>	Cervical 3-4	Respirations
<ul><li>Mid-Chest</li></ul>	Thoracic 4	Paralysis of
		arms and
legs		
<ul> <li>Belly Button</li> </ul>	Thoracic 10	Paralysis of legs
<ul><li>Groin</li></ul>	Lumbar 1-2	Weakness or
of legs		Paralysis

#### Signs of Spinal Cord Injuries

- Pain in the neck or back
- Gently pressing increases pain
- Pain when patient tries to move
- Problems breathing.
- If a patient cannot move or has no feeling



#### Spine Injury Treatment

- Immobilize the patient
- Keep the head and spine in the same position as found.
- Only move the patient if the airway is blocked or there is immediate danger
- Perform CPR if necessary
- Call 911

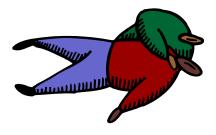
#### If the patient is conscious, ask:

"What happened?"

"Where does is hurt?"

"Can you move your hands and feet?"

"Can you feel me touch you?"



 Head injuries or more specifically, brain injuries can occur from many different causes. However, the result is a decrease in brain function.

#### Common causes of brain injuries:

- Blow to the head
- Stroke
- Falls
- Suffocation
- Drug overdose







#### What is cerebrospinal fluid?

The brain and spinal cord are surrounded with a liquid called cerebrospinal fluid.

#### **Cerebral Spinal Fluid**

- Nourishes brain cells
- Acts as a shock absorber

#### **Skull Fractures**

- Cerebrospinal fluid mixed with blood may drain from the patient's nose and/or ears.
- Do not attempt to stop the flow

- Signs of a concussion are:
- Confusion.
- Staggering.
- Unconsciousness.
- Inability to breathe.

- Emergency Care for Head Injuries
- Monitor ABC's (airway, breathing and circulation).
- Control bleeding.
- Bandage loosely
- If convulsing, clear area.
- Call 911.



## 1. What is the liquid called that surrounds the brain and spinal cord?

- concussion fluid
- brain fluid
- 3. cerebrospinal fluid
- 4. circular fluid

# 2. Which of the following is NOT the expected problem when there is a midneck injury?

- Breathing problems
- paralysis of the leg
- 3. paralysis of the arms
- 4. inability to smile

# 3. What do the ABC's stand for in an emergency situation?

- Airway bleeding and circulations
- 2. Airway breathing and circulation
- Alignment breathing and circulation
- Airway breathing and concussion

# 4. What is the most important thing to remember when treating a patient with a possible injury?

- 1. Rolling them over
- 2. Do not move them
- 3. Set them up
- 4. Elevate their feet

## 5. What questions should you ask a patient with possible spin injury?

- 1. How many fingers am I holding up?
- 2. Are you on any medication?
- 3. Can you move your head from side to side?
- 4. Can you move your hands and feet?