

Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep

EMS Response to Suicide

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Issues in Suicide

- Suicide has a strong emotional component
- We are trained to look for objective signs and symptoms (e.g. pulse below 60 is bradycardia)
- We may feel uncomfortable around attempted suicide patients
- Dealing with family members left behind is difficult

Suicide

- 8th Leading Cause of Death
- 3rd Leading Cause of Death in the 15 - 25 Year Age Group
- 10 - 15% of Single Occupant MVCs are Suicide Attempts

Suicide Methods

- Firearms - 60%
- Poisoning - 18%
- Strangulation - 15%
- Cutting - 1%
- Other - 6%

Suicide - Risk Factors

- Single/Divorced/Widowed
- Depression
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- Family Member Suicide

Suicide vs. Autoerotic Death

- Sexual vs. Suicidal Intent
- Timing of Orgasm with Hypoxic Euphoria
- Young Males

Suicide vs. Autoerotic Death

- Erotic Materials Found (Hidden)
- Victim Partially Clothed or Redressed
- Conflicting Accounts of Events

Psychiatric Emergencies Treatment Issues

- SAFETY!
- Medical Treatment is a Priority
- Psychological Care
- Restraint?

Restraint

- Determining the need
- Legal issues
- When is restraint an EMS Function?

Restraint

- How many people to restrain effectively?

Positional Asphyxia

- Death associated with restraint
- Hog-tie or Hobble Position
- After Exertion
- Hyperthermia

Psychiatric Patient Care

- Spend Time/Don't Hurry
- Be Calm and Direct
- Identify Yourself and Your Role
- Use Positive Body Language

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Psychiatric Patient Care

- Show Interest, Not Pity
- Non-Judgmental Attitude
- Have a Plan of Action
- Do Not Leave the Patient Alone

Suicide by Cop

- Making a Threatening Action Against a Law Enforcement Officer.
- Officer Responds with Deadly Physical Force

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- Suicide Note Found
- "Victim" Often Apologizes to Officer

*Good Psychiatric
Care is Good
People Care!*