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First Aid *for* NURSES

With Special Emphasis on Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Warfare

Karesh Prasad

2nd Edition

JAYPEE

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Chapter 3 Examination of Patient

It is necessary to perform a quick and efficient examination of the patient to diagnose his condition and to give prompt first aid.

The history may be obtained from the patient himself or from on lookers if the patient is unconscious. The complaints of the patient are taken as clue to the nature of injury sustained.

- *Pulse:* Note the pulse for its rate, rhythm, volume and tension
- *Breathing:* Note if breathing is slow, fast, absent or gasping
- *Pallor:* Note pallor or the degree of whiteness of tongue, conjunctiva and nails. This indicates the severity of bleeding
- Blueness of tongue, lips, ear lobe and nail—indicates lack of oxygen
- Bleeding from any part of body
- Swelling.

A head to toe examination should be done.

HEAD

- Observe skin color, wound, contusion and facial symmetry
- Assess level of consciousness
- Check pupils
- Palpate for depression of skull
- Check ears and nose for fluid or blood
- Check mouth for bleeding/any foreign body/dentures.

NECK

Observe and palpate for areas of tenderness and deformity.

ARMS

- Palpate entire length for pain, wounds, deformity and sensation
- Ask about pain, tingling, numbness and movement.

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CHEST

- Palpate clavicles and shoulders
- Observe for wounds and whether chest expands normally upon inspiration
- Press gently on sternum and ribs to check integrity.

ABDOMEN

- Observe for distention or wounds
- Palpate for rigidity and tenderness.

PELVIS

- Palpate iliac crest and pubis for pain
- Observe for incontinence of bladder and bowel.

SPINE

Palpate for tenderness, wounds and deformity.

LEGS

- Palpate entire length for pain, deformity, wound and sensation
- Ask about pain, tingling, numbness and movement.

Points to Remember

- The casualty assessment includes: Systematic process for assessment of trauma, recognizing life-threatening situation and prioritizing care.
- Casualty assessment helps: By forming a casualty assessment, one determines mental status, evaluate breathing, circulation and identify the care to be provided as per priority.
- The primary rule of first aid is always protect yourself first. Never put yourself at risk.

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First Aid *for* NURSES

Salient Features

- Written as per INC revised syllabus for graduate and undergraduate nursing students.
- Written in simple language with self-explanatory figure and diagrams.
- For easy reference summary is given at the end of chapters as 'Points to Remember'.
- Special attention given to first aid measures in nuclear, chemical and biological warfare.

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