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Prehospital pediatric respiratory distress and airway management interventions

Matthew Harris

Northwell Health, National Association of EMS Physicians (NAEMSP), USA

Pediatric respiratory distress is a frequent reason for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) response in children. The unique physiologic and anatomic difference in children coupled with the relative inexperience and comfort of EMS clinicians with this age group, make the evaluation and management of respiratory distress challenging. This is only compounded when considering critically ill-children. Devices and techniques such as bag-valve-mask ventilation, endotracheal intubation, supra-glottic airway devices, and noninvasive ventilation offer important tools for airway management in critically ill pediatric EMS patients, but are infrequently utilized in children. Optimizing the prehospital care of pediatric patients with acute respiratory or airway emergencies requires a strong foundation in education (both initial and continuous), access to age-appropriate equipment, an evidence-based approach to care, and robust quality improvement initiatives. This presentation aims to identify key aspects of pediatric assessment and management in the prehospital setting, with a focus on a step-wise approach to care. Additionally, this presen-

tation aims to evaluate the evidence surrounding prehospital airway management strategies, as well as opportunities to introduce non-invasive positive pressure ventilation in the prehospital setting.

References

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E: mharris13@northwell.edu