

EMS Safety NOW!

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Introduction and Overview:

The dramatic upswing in serious injuries and fatalities among EMS personnel in the past few years has led to a new awareness of the dangers to you and your fellow responders every time you answer a call. Numerous organizations are looking at how our ambulances are designed, how our equipment works, and how we can be safer while still doing what we need to do for our patients. This session will discuss not only what's coming, but what we can do NOW to improve safety for us and for our patients. We will look at some of the radical changes in vehicle design, and discuss how we may need to re-think the idea that "bigger is better". We'll look at what other countries are doing to improve EMS safety, and how we might adapt their approach to our practice. And we'll look to see what's being done by forward-looking EMS agencies in the USA to help ensure that all of their providers go home safe and healthy after every shift.

Objectives: at the end of this presentation, the student will be able to:

1. Discuss the development of EMS vehicles in the US
2. Identify and discuss safety issues inherent in the design of today's ambulance
3. Identify specific safety risks and ways to avoid them during the various phases of an ambulance call
4. Discuss coming changes in ambulance design that will enhance provider and patient safety
5. Discuss current efforts to improve EMS safety, and how you can play an important role in creating an EMS Culture of Safety

References:

- Kahn, CA "EMS, First Responders & Crash Injury", Topics in Emergency Medicine, 2006:28(1)68-74
- NAEMT EMS Safety Course (www.naemt.org)
- EVS Ltd. (www.evsltd.com)
- Ferno (www.ferno.com)
- Stryker EMS (www.ems.stryker.com)
- Wheeled Coach (www.wheeledcoach.com)
- Horton Emergency Vehicles (www.hortonambulance.com)
- American Medical Response (www.amr.net)
- Swab Wagon Company (www.swabwagon.com)
- Whelen Engineering (www.whelen.com)
- Physio-Control Inc (www.physio-control.com)
- Zoll Medical Corporation (www.zoll.com)
- Michigan Instruments Inc (www.michiganinstruments.com)
- EMS Safety Foundation (www.emssafetyfoundation.org)

Lesson Outline:

- 0:00 – 0:05 Introduction
- 0:05 – 0:15 Development of the modern ambulance
- 0:15 – 0:25 Dangers during emergency response
- 0:25 – 0:30 Dangers in the vehicle cab
- 0:30 – 0:40 Scene safety issues
- 0:40 – 0:50 Lifting and moving the patient to the ambulance
- 0:50 – 1:05 Hazards within the patient compartment
- 1:05 – 1:10 Transferring the patient at the hospital
- 1:10 – 1:25 The future of EMS safety – what’s coming?
- 1:25 – 1:30 Conclusion