Soft-Tissue Injuries: Closed Injuries

Treatment

- Cervical spinal immobilization, if needed
- Stabilize airway, breathing, and circulation
- Control major bleeding
- If critically ill, secure the patient to a long spine board
- Treat for shock, as necessary
- Apply a splint to the injured area
  - Immobilize the long bones above and below an injured joint
  - Assess neurovascular status before and after splinting
  - Pad the splint for additional immobilization
- Transport

Soft-Tissue Injuries: Closed Injuries

Pertinent Considerations and Findings

- History of blunt trauma
- Pain at the site of injury
- Swelling beneath the skin
- Discoloration of the skin
  - Contusions
  - Ecchymosis
  - Hematomas
- Crush injuries
Physical Examination

- Airway, breathing, and circulation
  - Ensure the airway is patent (take spinal precautions if needed)
  - Insert airway adjuncts, as needed
  - Assist ventilations, if needed
  - Palpate the chest wall and look for DCAP-BTLS
  - Check breath sounds
  - Assess pulse rate and quality
  - Determine skin color and condition

- Level of consciousness

Vital Signs

- Focused physical exam

Treatment

- Maintain an open airway
- Apply oxygen if needed
- Assist ventilations with a bag-mask device, if needed
- “RICES”
  - Rest: Keep the patient calm
  - Ice: Apply ice to the affected area(s)
  - Compression: Applying pressure over the injury site will slow bleeding
Elevation: Elevate the affected area above the patient’s heart to minimize swelling

Splinting: Splint the affected area to reduce pain and bleeding

- Notify hospital and transport

**Soft-Tissue Injuries: Open Injuries**

**Pertinent Considerations and Findings**

- Wound contamination
- Abrasions
- Lacerations
- Incisions
- Avulsions
- Penetrating wounds

**Physical Examination**

- General impression
- Airway, breathing, circulation
  - Take spinal precautions, as indicated
  - Evaluate the patient’s voice and speaking ability
  - Assess work of breathing checking rate and depth of respiration
  - Listen to breath sounds
  - Place an occlusive dressing over an open chest wound
- Assess pulse rate and quality
- Determine skin color and condition
- Control any life-threatening bleeding
  - Level of consciousness
  - Vital Signs
  - Focused physical exam

**Treatment**
- Maintain an open airway
- Apply oxygen, if needed
- Assist ventilations with a bag-mask device, if needed
- Apply a dry sterile dressing
- Maintain the pressure and secure the dressing
- Apply a second dressing over the first if bleeding continues or recurs
- Splint the extremity
- Notify hospital and transport