

**REGION I EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
STANDING MEDICAL ORDERS
EMT – Basic, EMT – Paramedic**

SMO: Child Abuse / Neglect

Overview: The severity of abuse may range from minor injuries to lethal acts. Various forms of child abuse and neglect can result in physical or emotional impairment, including physical injury, sexual exploitation, infliction of emotional pain and neglect. Neglect is the most common form of child abuse; many children suffer more than one type of maltreatment. Neglect may be the failure to provide physical care including medical care, nutrition, shelter and clothing. Neglect may also be the failure to provide emotional care.

INFORMATION NEEDED

- History of abuse
- Initial assessment of patient
- Focused assessment of patient

OBJECTIVE FINDINGS

Physical Indicators of child abuse

- Bruises/welts/lacerations
- Injuries that are unexplained/poorly explained/incompatible with explanation
- Burns; shape and size often reflect object used to burn
- Repeated injuries
- Frequent hospitalization
- Repeated use of Emergency Department services for injury
- Discrepancies between history and presenting illness
- Time delay between injury and coming to hospital (1-2 days)
- Reluctance to discuss circumstances surrounding injury
- Unexplained injuries
- Alleged third party inflicted injuries

Psychological Indicators of the abuse child

- A child less than 6 years of age who is excessively passive
- A child over 6 years of age who is excessively aggressive
- A child that doesn't mind if the parents leave the room
- A child that cries hopelessly during treatment or cries very little
- A child that doesn't look at parents for reassurance
- A child that is very wary of physical contact
- A child that is extremely apprehensive
- A child that appears constantly on the alert for danger
- A child that constantly seeks favors, food, or things

TREATMENT

- Scene safety, notify law enforcement if needed
- Routine medical and/or trauma care
- Treat any injuries
- If the parent or caregiver refuses to allow you to transport the child, notify the police and stay on the scene until they arrive.
- Attempt to preserve evidence

Documentation of adherence to protocol:

- Types of injuries sustained
- If local law enforcement were called

PRECAUTIONS AND COMMENTS

- If child abuse is suspected it must be reported
- DCFS reporting number is 1-800-25 ABUSE (1-800-252-2873)