

You Are the Rescuer

You Are the Rescuer, previously called the Scenario Discussion Forum, has always received an overwhelmingly positive response on the evaluations that refresher participants fill out. The following pages contain three scenarios that place "you as the rescuer." They will be discussed at your refresher.

_ Carefully read these scenarios, each of which is based on an actual incident.

_ Formulate answers to the questions that follow each scenario as if you were the rescuer at your local area, using additional paper if necessary.

_ Keep in mind that there are many correct answers! The fourth edition Outdoor Emergency Care text can serve as a valuable resource, but your answers may vary depending on local policies and protocols.

_ Bring your written answers to your refresher and be prepared to participate in the discussion.

_ "You Are the Rescuer" is available in Word or PDF format in the education/OEC section of the NSP website (www.nsp.org).

Scenario I

After an overnight storm has deposited 18 inches of fresh powder on the slopes, the day is sunny with a temperature of 18°F. At 10:18, you receive the report that a skier has struck a tree on the skier's left side of a narrow, intermediate run; just downhill from a shallow mogulfield. No further information is immediately available.

Upon approaching the scene, you're waved down by a small group gathered near a man lying in the snow at the base of a tree. The witnesses report seeing the man lose control in the moguls and veer into the trees to avoid hitting a child. The injured guest is approximately 30 years old and is responsive. He seems to be in agony, and is crying out in a foreign language. None of the bystanders know the patient and none are familiar with the language. The man is covered with snow that has apparently fallen from the adjacent tree, which is a conifer about 36 inches around.

Taking a moment to put on sterile gloves, you note that the patient's face is bloody, with multiple lacerations and a deformed nose. He is struggling to breathe and exhibiting short, rapid, gurgling breaths. During the rapid survey, the patient cries out when his left ribs are palpated. Upon exposing the chest, you observe paradoxical movement of the left chest segment, along with evident contusions and abrasions of the skin overlying the ribs. At 10:28, the pulse rate is 128/minute and the respiration rate is 36/minute.

Further assessment reveals instability of the left maxilla, with the left eye beginning to swell shut. At 10:33, the pulse is 122/minute and respiratory effort is more labored at 38/minute. Aside from eliciting a response to painful stimuli, you're unable to establish any other means of communication-although the patient appears to understand your role as rescuer.

Questions

1. What probable injuries are portrayed in this scenario?
2. What signs have you observed in this patient that lead you to believe there has been a significant chest injury?
3. In addition to those mentioned in this scenario, name five other signs of significant chest injury.

4. Describe the emergency care you would provide for this patient and explain any special considerations that may be warranted.

Scenario II

You are summoned by dispatch to investigate a report of an injured skier in a wooded section near a black-diamond run.

Approaching the curve of the slope, you see several people waving frantically on the trail's edge. While you remove your skis, mark the scene, and put on sterile gloves, the witnesses recount that a young male skier was moving very fast, lost control, and then catapulted at a high rate of speed over the slope's edge, up an embankment, and into the woods. One witness describes hearing the skier strike at least two trees, and adds that "the sounds were sickening."

When you approach the skier in the stand of trees, you find that he is lying supine with his right ski boot lying in his groin against the medial aspect of his upper right upper thigh. The young man's ski pants are bloody over the outer aspect of his severely deformed thigh, and there is also blood staining his ski pants at an angulated area just above his right ski boot.

The skier, who looks to be about 25 years old, is moaning in pain and complains of severe tingling in his right foot. He is oriented times three and denies loss of consciousness. A rapid body survey fails to reveal any other obvious injury except those noted above. Initial vital signs: pulse-116/minute, strong and regular; respirations-20/minute, deep and halting. Vital signs at 5 minutes: pulse-112/minute, strong and regular; respirations-18/minute and deep.

Questions

1. What probable injuries are portrayed in this scenario?
2. Describe and prioritize the emergency care you would provide for this patient. (Discussion points: emergency care, personnel, equipment, and transport)
3. How would your care and priorities change if an injury similar to this occurred in the backcountry, away from a developed ski area?

Scenario III

It's a sunny, windless day with all runs open and all lifts in operation. Ticket sales are at 90 percent capacity as skiers and riders are taking advantage of packed-powder conditions and no ice. At 2 p.m., dispatch receives a report that a young skier hit lift tower #10 on Sky Ridge, and, although standing, is stuck in the well around the tower. You are dispatched to the scene.

Upon arriving at the scene and discovering that there are actually two injured guests present, you alert the dispatcher that additional help may be necessary. You remove your skis and mark the incident site, making a mental note that the lift tower is fully padded. You also take note of the following information: (1) The first patient is a young female around 10 years old. Her face is covered in blood and she is bleeding from the forehead. Conscious and responsive, she is standing awkwardly in the

2-foot-deep tower well and complaining that her leg is stuck. Both skis are off.

(2) The second patient, also female, is a 12- or 13-year old snowboarder. She looks dazed and is sitting up in the snow, holding her jaw.

Donning sterile gloves, you hand the first girl a 4 x 4-inch gauze pad and instruct her to hold it firmly on her laceration, which she says she received when she cut her head on her ski while trying to get out of the well. Other than

being stuck and suffering some minor bleeding, the first girl does not have any other complaints.

You then turn your attention to the second girl, who is wincing and appears to be in a great deal of pain. Mumbling as she describes the incident, she tells you that the younger girl veered off the trail and fell into the tower well and that she fell shortly afterwards, coming to rest just above the other girl. Focusing on her face, you notice that she has braces and is bleeding slightly from the mouth. Noticing a strong smell of alcohol on her breath you inquire about her age and learn she is 13. Upon questioning, she admits to drinking some beer with her friends earlier.

Her jaw is noticeably offset and the teeth do not align. She is breathing normally and in answer to your questions says she is not taking any medications and that she ate lunch about an hour previous.

You further learn that the snowboarder fell face-first, hitting her lower jaw fairly hard, first on her knee and then on the snow. She did not hit the skier or the tower and her board is still attached to her feet.

Questions

1. What probable injuries are portrayed in this scenario?
2. What emergency care would you provide?
3. What personnel, equipment, and transportation would you request?