THERAPEUTIC COMMUNICATION

2006 Edition

THERAPEUTIC COMMUNICATION

- A planned, deliberate, professional act that use communications techniques to achieve a positive relationship and shared understanding of information for desired patient care goals

EFFECTIVE VERBAL TECHNIQUES

- Use fewer words
- Express ideas simply
- Use examples
- Repeat important parts of the message
- *Avoid technical jargon*
- Use appropriate speed or pace

ELEMENTS OF COMMUNICATION

- Source- spoken or written words
- Encoding- placing the message in a format
- Message- information sent
- Decoding- act of interpreting the message
- Receiver- the person intended to understand the message
- Feedback- the receiver's response

INTERNAL FACTORS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

- Paramedics *must genuinely like people*, must be able to empathize with others and must have the ability to listen.

ARE YOU A GOOD LISTENER?

- Do you face the patient while they speak?
- Do you maintain eye contact?
- Do you show an attentive posture?
- Are you a fidgeter?
- Do you nod in acknowledgment
- Do you lean toward the speaker to communicate involvement?

EXTERNAL FACTORS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

- Privacy
- Interruptions
- Private/personal space?
- Eye contact-equal level
- Personal dress

PATIENT INTERVIEW

- As important as, if not more important, than the physical exam!!!!!

PATIENT INTERVIEW

- Begins with introduction (A & O X 4?)
- Assess patients non-verbal cues
  - voice inflection,facial expression,body language

PATIENT INTERVIEW

- Open ended questions
- Limit "yes" or "no" answers
- One question at a time
- Answer patient questions
- Echo,empathize,clarify,explain
- Silence can be golden

PATIENT INTERVIEW
TRAPS

- Giving false assurance
- Showing disapproval
- Making opinions
- Stereotyping the patient or complaint
- Using medical jargon
- Talking to much,interrupting
- Asking "why" questions
- Being defensive

DEVELOPING PATIENT RAPPORT

- Maintain professionalism
- Put patient at ease
- Show respect
- Be compassionate
- Show your expertise
- Gain their TRUST

DEVELOPING PATIENT RAPPORT

- Patients communicate three ways with EMS
  - They pour out everything.
  - They reveal some problems and conceal others.
  - The hide the most embarrassing part of their problem.

- EMS TELEPHONE
  - How many times have you had a patient who told a different story to the next provider in the chain?

QUESTIONING?

- OPEN vs. CLOSED
  - Open
    - How do you fell today?
    - Describe your pain to me?
    - Are you taking any medication?
  - CLOSED
    - When did you take your last insulin shot?
    - Can you point where your pain is?

RESISTANCE

- The patient wants to maintain a personal image and is fearful of losing that image.
- The patient is uncertain if the Paramedic will respond with rejection or ridicule.
- HOW DO WE OVERCOME RESISTANCE?
- Maintain professional non-judgmental demeanor. Establish privacy and TRUST

SHIFTING FOCUS

- The paramedic may have to shift focus away from an obvious problem that the patient is reluctant to discuss
- CAN YOU THINK OF AN EXAMPLE AND HOW YOU WOULD DEAL WITH IT USING SHIFTING FOCUS?

HEARING

- Hearing is thought to be the last sensation lost with unconsciousness and the first to be regained. Be careful what you say in the presence of the unconscious patient.

THE HOSTILE PATIENT

- Do not approach without law enforcement assistance.
- Always have an escape route.
- Explain the advantages of cooperation to the patient

COMMUNICATING WITH CHILDREN

- Rapport needs to be established with both the child and parents.
- In young children, conversation is often directed to the parent.
- Children should be dealt with at eye level.
- Adolescents want to be talked to like adults.
- Toys can act like as a good example

HEARING IMPAIRED PATIENTS

- Can use lip reading or writing.
- Reversing your stethoscope can help.
- Face the patient squarely
- Use short sentences, enunciate clearly.

BLIND PATIENTS

- Assess for a hearing impairment.
- Speak in a normal voice
- Describe the personnel in attendance
- All treatments and procedures should be explained in detail