

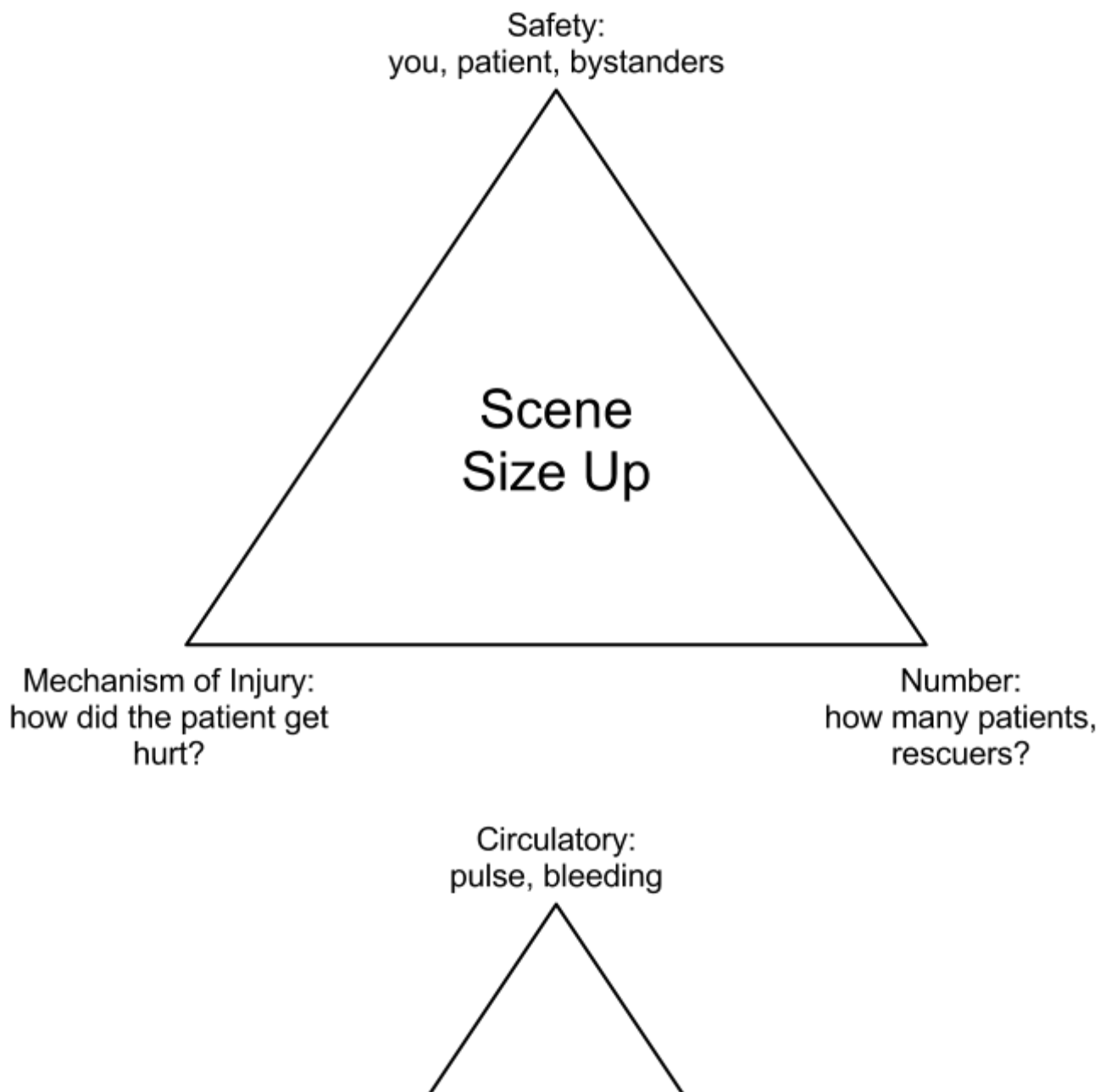
Patient Assessment



By Erika Uyterhoeven, March 6, 2012

There are 3 triangles of patient assessment:

- Scene size up
- Initial assessment
- Focused History and Physical Exam





Initial Assessment

Respiratory:
breathing, airway

Nervous:
brain (AVPU), spine

AVPU scale for consciousness assessment

- Alert - communicative and awake
- Verbal - reacts to verbal stimulus
- Pain - reacts to pain stimulus
- Unresponsive



SAMPLE History

Focused History and Physical Exam

Physical Exam

Vital Signs

SAMPLE History

- S - signs and symptoms
- A - allergies
- M - medications

- P - past pertinent history
- L - last 'ins and outs'
- E - events leading to incident

Vital Signs

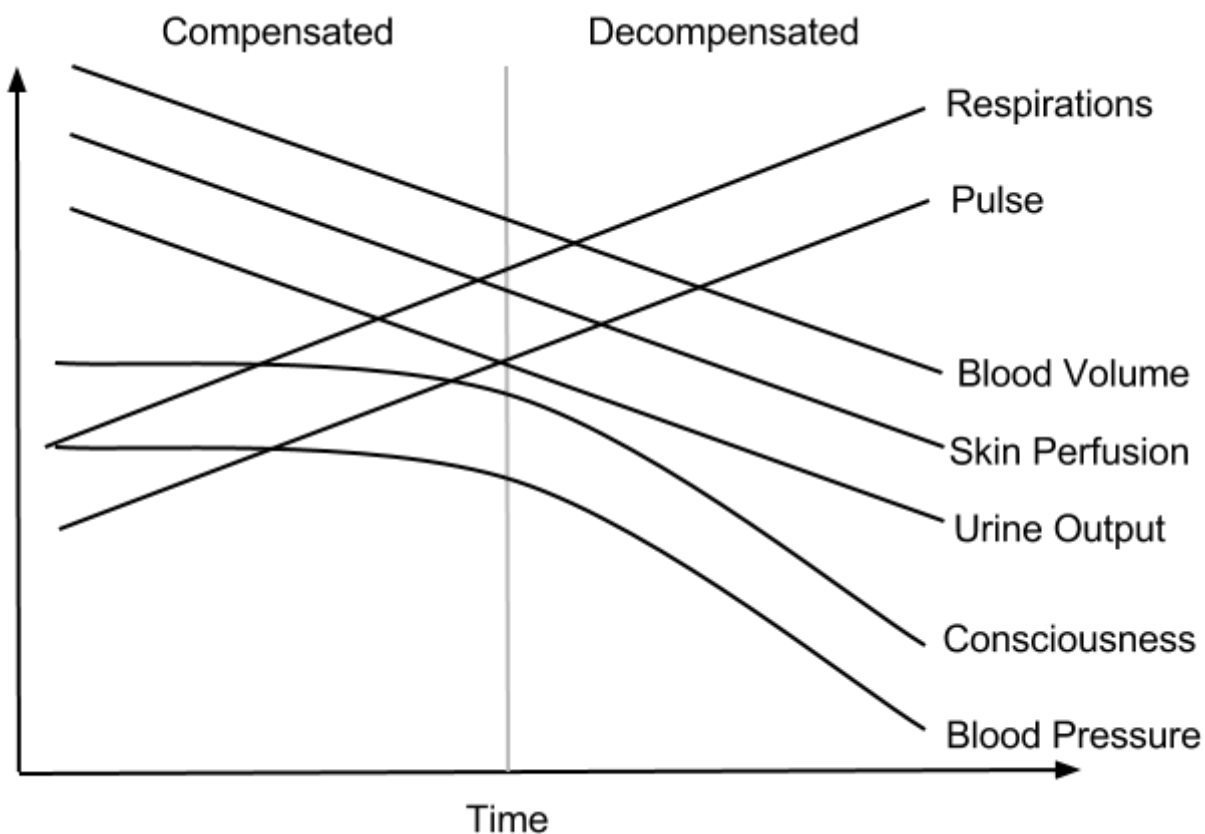
- Pulse rate
- Breathing rate
- Skin condition and temperature

Scenario Practice 1

Really any scenario works for practicing patient assessment. Have rescuers verbalize everything to practice remembering the 3 triangles as an outline of what to look out for. Try scenarios where if rescuers overlook a piece of assessment, patient's conditions deteriorate and rescuers will have to reassess and think about anything they overlooked.

Trends of Shock

By observing vital signs over time, you can look out for trends of shock or blood volume loss. This is a guideline to look out for dehydration or trauma involving blood loss. Know the difference between this and an acute stress reaction (ASR).



Scenario Practice 2

Try a scenario related to blood loss or dehydration. This allows rescuers to practice looking out for signs of compensated and

decompensated blood volume.

Quick CPR review

Usually only effective (in wilderness setting) when cardiovascular system is intact. CPR usually needs to be followed up by further medical attention. Situations where CPR may be most effective in a wilderness setting are:

- lightning
- submersion

Do NOT do CPR if patient has been:

- submerged under water for over 1 hour
- trauma with no pulse
- after 30 minutes of CPR