



Coffee Break Training - Emergency Medical Services

Human Trafficking

No. EMS-2016-1 January 6, 2016

Learning Objective: The student will be able to recognize the signs of human trafficking.



Human trafficking is the use of force, fraud or coercion to exploit someone for labor or commercial sex. Any minor exploited for commercial sex is a victim of human trafficking. Thousands of men, women and children are trafficked in the United States every year. Many of these victims are lured from their homes with false promises of well-paying jobs; instead, they are forced into prostitution, involuntary domestic servitude, farm or factory labor, or other types of forced labor.

Approximately one-third of human trafficking victims are treated by medical providers. Similar to observing patients for signs of abuse, fire and Emergency Medical Services responders should be aware of the signs of human trafficking.

Trafficking indicators:

- Is the patient accompanied by another person who seems controlling?
- Does the person accompanying the patient insist on giving information or talking?
- Does the patient have trouble communicating due to language or cultural barriers?
- Are the patient's identification documents (for example, passport, driver's license) being held or controlled by someone else?
- Does the patient appear submissive or fearful?
- Is the patient inadequately dressed for the situation or work done?
- Are there security measures designed to keep the patient on the premises?
- Does the patient live in a degraded, unsuitable place or share sleeping quarters?
- Is the patient suffering from classic presentations found in trafficking victims?

Classic presentations found in trafficking victims:

- Bruises in various stages of healing caused by physical abuse.
- Scars, mutilations or infections due to improper medical care.
- Urinary difficulties, pelvic pain, pregnancy or rectal trauma caused from working in the sex industry.
- Chronic back, hearing, cardiovascular or respiratory problems as a result of forced manual labor in unsafe conditions.
- Poor eyesight and/or eye problems due to dimly lit work sites.
- Malnourishment and/or serious dental problems.
- Disorientation, confusion, phobias or panic attacks caused by daily mental abuse, torture and culture shock.

When observing patients or incidents with these signs of human trafficking, responders should notify local law enforcement or call 866-347-2423 anytime.

For more information and resources on human trafficking, visit www.dhs.gov/bluecampaign.

For archived downloads, go to:

http://www.usfa.fema.gov/training/coffee_break/