

### **Case Study 35: Emergency Nursing – Chest Trauma**

You are the trauma nurse working in the emergency department (ED) of a busy tertiary care facility. You receive a call from the paramedics that they are en route with the victim of gunshot wounds to the chest and abdomen. Perpetrators shot the 32-year-old man during a convenience store robbery. The victim was a customer; the clerk died at the scene. They started 2 16-gauge IVlines with lactated Ringer's solution and oxygen by nonrebreather mask at 15 L/min. The patienthas a sucking chest wound on the left and a wound in the right upper quadrant of the abdomen.

Vital signs in the field are 90/46, 140, and 42. The paramedics state they are having difficulty ventilating the patient, who is diaphoretic, very pale, and lethargic. The estimated time of arrivalis 4 minutes.

1. To help determine the extent of the patient's injuries, the most important question the nurseneeds to ask the paramedics is **a. "How long ago was the patient shot?"** b. "Do you have the weapon that was used?" c. "What was the reason this incident occurred?" d. "Where are the assumed entry and exit wounds?"
2. Describe a sucking chest wound. Air can enter the pleural space through the chest wall duringinspiration due to a penetrating chest wound
3. What are the classic assessment findings associated with a sucking chest wound?
  - Respiratory: Dyspnea, respiratory distress; cough with or without hemoptysis; cyanosisof mouth, face, nail beds, mucous membranes; tracheal deviation, audible air escaping from chest wound; decreased breath sounds; frothy secretions.

# Emergency Case Study Scenarios For Nurses

**Alma Aradia Peterson**



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