



Personalized Assessment and Change Education Newsletter

Education Seminar No: 24

How to Prepare for Your Trip to the Emergency Department

November 21st, 2018

Doctor Bhargava opened the seminar by welcoming all. This year, to add value for the general public, Doctor Bhargava and the Northumberland PACE partners (see below) have welcomed students enrolled in the Interactive Media Development – Film and Television Production Program at Loyalist College to participate. The young students record the sessions as part of their media studies and make the speaker remarks available online via live feed or podcast. This approach will establish greater exposure for the PACE Education Seminars and establish an archive of teaching information. The doctor then introduced Doctor Peter Barnett to facilitate the evening's session pertaining to how to prepare for an Emergency Department visit.

Dr. Peter Barnett:

Doctor Barnett is the Department Chief of Emergency at [Northumberland Hills Hospital](#) (NHH). He is a relative newcomer to the NHH medical team joining the hospital just over two years ago from the United States. He has years of experience practicing as an Emergency Medicine Specialist in California. At NHH he is responsible for the emergency department that is staffed by family physicians, emergency medicine specialists, nurse practitioners, specialized nursing staff and other health care professionals.

He opened his presentation by stating that he is a member of the American Board of Emergency Medicine (ABEM). The ABEM logo is an hourglass that represents timely care, rapid resuscitation, and a highly developed understanding of time-sensitive systems is a hallmark of emergency medicine. The hourglass is an accurate and dependable instrument that tells time without interruption. So too is the dependability of emergency medicine. The millions of hours of continuous physician presence in hospital emergency departments, without any interpretation in coverage over decades, belie a commitment of nearly unfathomable scale. The hourglass is a reliable, time-tested instrument, the specialty of emergency medicine remains at the ready to care for any patient, **anywhere**, for **anything**, at **any time**.

He then provide an overview where emergency medicine specialists play a major role outside a hospital emergency department such as; major highway traffic accidents (eg: caused by California fog); the Los Vegas mass shooting; and, the 911 disaster in New York where he worked in a Trauma Centre set-up in a school near the World Trade Centre. He also referenced how he stepped into action in the Los Angeles Coliseum when a member of his daughter's cheerleading team was in distress.

He pointed out that the origin of **Triage** goes a way back. Triage is the process of determining the priority of patients' treatments based on the severity of their condition. The term triage may have originated during the Napoleonic Wars. It was used further during World War I by French doctors treating the battlefield wounded at the aid stations behind the front. Those responsible for the removal of the wounded from a battlefield or their care afterwards would divide the victims into three categories:

- Those who are likely to live, regardless of what care they receive;
- Those who are unlikely to live, regardless of what care they receive;
- Those for whom immediate care might make a positive difference in outcome.

Today many Emergency Medical Services (EMS) systems, a similar model may sometimes still be applied. In the earliest stages of an incident, such as when one or two paramedics exist to twenty or more patients,

practicality demands that the above, more "primitive" model will be used. However once a full response has occurred and many hands are available, paramedics will immediately stabilize vital signs.

ABCDE's of Emergency Medicine:

The **ABCDE approach** is intended as a rapid assessment of a deteriorating or critically ill patient, and it is designed to provide the initial management of life-threatening conditions in order of priority, using a structured method to keep the patient alive and to achieve the first steps to improvement, rather than making a definitive diagnosis. This approach will determine who will be seen immediately and who can wait.

- Guidelines: A: Airway
B: Breathing
C: Circulation
D: Disability
E: Environment, Anything Else

Items that should be brought to the Emergency Department:

The Northumberland Hills Hospital emergency department is a very busy place. The total emergency department visits from April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018 was 34,052. Learn what you and your family should bring with you if you have the opportunity to prepare for your trip to the Emergency, the triage process is used to prioritize who needs to be seen first and more.

- ▶ Ontario Health Card (OHIP) number, for registration.
- ▶ A current list of any medications taken on a regular basis, or the medications themselves.
- ▶ Any other important medical information (e.g. allergies & adverse reactions).
- ▶ Recent test results.
- ▶ Contact information – family doctor; other medical specialists; family / friend contact data.
- ▶ If needed – who will provide transportation.
- ▶ File of Life document or medical app on your cell phone.

To avoid the emergency department have a healthy life style, eat healthy, have a regular exercise program, get an annual flu shot, sleep well and have good hygiene . . . ***'Get Healthy / Stay Healthy'***.

Doctor Barnett's Summary Comments:

As a physician who has worked extensively in the United States, he stated that he was very impressed with the Canadian Healthcare System and stated that The Northumberland Hills Hospital is a great place. Patients should be proud of the care they receive.

Session Summary

Doctor Bhargava wrapped-up the session with a question and answer period. He emphasized that questions could lead to subsequent session themes.

- ▶ Important to update your medication list.
- ▶ A pictorial image of your body showing areas of illness or trauma is an important tool.
- ▶ Ensure accurate patient information is provided to emergency.
- ▶ At NNH emergency the wait time is based on the degree of illness.
- ▶ It is important to bring accurate information, but also very important to take out information and follow-up with your doctor.
- ▶ Develop a sense of trust with the emergency doctor's judgement.
- ▶ Doctors in the Emergency department also tend to emergencies in the hospital.
- ▶ A Smart phone is an important device to store your medical information.
- ▶ A photo copy of your File of Life that you email to yourself while travelling could be of great value.

About Northumberland PACE

A collaborative between community health-care providers and local residents interested in learning more and promoting health and wellness, PACE (which stands for Personalized Assessment and Change Education) is a TED Talks-inspired speakers' series hosted (on a rotating basis) at Northumberland Hills Hospital in Cobourg and the Community Health Centres of Northumberland in Port Hope. Northumberland Hills Hospital, the Northumberland Family Health Team, The Community Health Centres of Northumberland, internal medicine specialists IMCare and local patients and caregivers are all represented on the 2018/19 planning table, as is the Interactive Media Development – Film and Television Production program at Loyalist College, which has partnered with the team to support audio and visual recording and distribution and, *NEW*, the NHH Foundation. Talks are held monthly at 5:30 PM, September through June, on the third Wednesday of the month. One hour in total, each talk consists of a 30-minute presentation followed by a 20-minute, interactive question and answer speaker/audience discussion and a short moderator summary to conclude. Seats are available free of charge, on a first-come, first-reserved basis. Preregistration is required, to manage room occupancy limits. For information on upcoming sessions, please visit www.pacetalks.com.
