UNIT 6 MANAGEMENT OF CHEST PAIN

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6.0 INTRODUCTION

Chest Pain is a symptom of various diseases and needs to be taken care when it occurs. There are many reasons and causes of chest pain as you have studied in the theory Unit 1 on Common Emergencies in Block 4 of Theory course. Here, we shall discuss the procedure for first aid you need to perform when chest pain occurs due to various causes. Let us learn how you will provide first aid to these victims as a first aid provider.

6.1 OBJECTIVES

After the completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- recognize Chest Pain due to various causes;
- assess a victim with Chest Pain;
- demonstrate First aid in case of Chest Pain; and
- perform First Aid as and when required.

6.2 RECOGNIZING CHEST PAIN DUE TO VARIOUS CAUSES

In this section, we will discuss the procedure for identifying chest pain due to various causes.

Purposes

The purpose of this procedure is to recognize this medical emergency.

Articles required

You will require various flashcards and various case scenarios for recognizing these emergencies.
Procedure

Step 1 To recognize chest pain due to angina, you will note that the victim describes pain in the chest that goes to jaw, arm and neck. The pain may also be felt at upper part of stomach or at the back. The pain increases with the exertion. It stays for 5-8 minutes only and decreases as the person rests or sits down (Fig. 6.1).

Step 2 To recognize chest pain due to Heart attack or myocardial infarction, you will note that the victim describes the pain in the chest which is severe and crushing just like somebody has put a heavy weight on the chest and the pain continues for more than 15 minutes and doesn’t go with rest. The pain spreads up to the neck and into the jaw and teeth, shoulder or down to one or both arms. The person feels that he/she will collapse with difficulty to breath. Nausea, vomiting, fainting, lot of sweating is common. You can also see that the skin is pale and cold. The victim is anxious and weak (Fig. 6.2).

Step 3 To recognize chest pain due to chest problems, you will note sudden, sharp chest pain often with shortness of breath, cough, anxiety, sweating with fast heart beat. The person can faint sometimes. The pain will be located in chest over lung area (Fig. 6.3).
Step 4  To recognize chest pain due to gastric problems, you will note Pain, nausea and vomiting with cramping or spasms in stomach (Fig. 6.4).

Thus, in the above steps we learnt how to recognize chest pain. In the next section, we will discuss how to assess chest pain. So, let’s continue.

6.3 ASSESSING A VICTIM HAVING CHEST PAIN

In this section, you will learn the skills for assessment of the victim having Chest pain.

Purpose
The main purpose of assessing the victim is to conduct assessment and provide first aid.

Articles required
For this activity you need to have a volunteer. However, he/she should be explained that they would have to be placed in a specific position by changing the posture.

Procedure
Step 1  Ask the volunteer to act as victim. Ask him/her to lie down on their back/sit as required.

Skills: The volunteer should sit/lie down comfortably. When lying he/she should lie on back with hand on the side of his/her body and both the feet straight.
Step 2  Conduct assessment as per the flow-diagram given below.

Skills: Perform Primary assessment and monitor chest pain. Check to find out the requirement of the situation.

Step 3  Assess and Monitor the victim.

Step 4  Give first aid

Skills: The specific first aid has been discussed in Sections 6.4 of this unit.

Step 5  Record and Report the findings, call for ambulance and Transport the victim.

Therefore, in this section we learnt the steps of assessment of scene and the victim when the emergency has arisen and when the emergency involves chest pain. Now we shall discuss the procedure for first aid in chest pain due to various causes.

6.4 PROCEDURE FOR FIRST AID IN CHEST PAIN DUE TO VARIOUS CAUSES

In this section, we shall be discussing the procedure for first aid in Chest Pain.

Articles required

The required articles are:

1) An adult volunteer to act as victim
2) Case scenario e.g. cases of chest pain due to various causes-angina, heart attack (Myocardial Infarction), chest problems, gastric problems.
3) First Aid Box
4) The standard articles required are dressing, triangular or roller bandages, scissors, safety pins, adhesive tape, Antiseptic lotion, cotton, disposable hand gloves, waste bag, tourniquet/binder as required, soap and water supply, plastic bags, ring pad etc. You will also require Angina Medicine as prescribed for the victim by his doctor.

Improvised articles can be used as discussed in Unit 6 of previous Block on “First Aid with Improvisation”.

Steps of Procedure for First Aid in Chest Pain due to Angina

Step 1  Wash hands.

**Skills:** This is important to prevent cross contamination.

Step 2  Make the victim or volunteer to lie down. Assess and Identify Angina.

**Skills:** Make the person lie down as demonstrating the case of chest pain.

Step 3  Ask the person to rest and calm down and Call the ambulance.

**Skills:** Make the person to rest completely and not do anything. The person must completely sit down and relax. Provide a calm place to rest if possible. Loosen Constrictive clothing.

Step 4  Position the person in half sitting position (Fig. 6.5) and support back and head.

**Fig. 6.5: Supporting victim from back when pillows are not available**

**Skills:** Make the person sit with support of pillows from behind and under the knees. You can also support him from back if the pillows are not available (Fig. 6.6).

**Fig. 6.6: Support victim’s head and back in sitting position**
Step 5  Monitor the victim after providing rest as the pain will cease in a few minutes after taking rest in case of angina.

Step 6  If pain doesn’t go and the person is a known angina patient i.e. has been diagnosed with this problem, ask him/her or his/her family members regarding any medicine which has been prescribed to him and if they know how to take it. Ask the victim to take the medicine as it will relieve his/her pain.

Skills: If the victim or his family members don’t have his medicine or they don’t know how to take the medicine or no medicine has ever been prescribed by the doctor, don’t give any medicine yourself. Also avoid medicine of any other patient.

Step 7  Keep Monitoring the victim. Perform secondary assessment and record and report.

Step 8  Transport to hospital as soon as the ambulance arrives.

Steps of Procedure for First Aid in Chest Pain due to Myocardial Infarction (Heart Attack)

Step 1  Wash hands.

Skills: This is important to prevent cross contamination.

Step 2  Make the victim or volunteer to lie down. Assess and Identify Myocardial Infarction.

Skills: Make the person lie down as demonstrating the case of chest pain.

Step 3  Ask the person to rest and calm down and Call the ambulance.

Skills: Make the person to rest completely and not do anything. Provide a calm place to rest if possible. Loosen Constrictive clothing.

Step 4  Position the person in half sitting position and support back and head as discussed for angina pain.

Skills: The angina pain will reduce as you rest the victim. But the pain in Heart Attack will continue to be present.

Step 5  Monitor the victim and be prepared to resuscitate as and when required.

Step 6  Perform secondary assessment and record and report.

Step 7  Transport to hospital as soon as the ambulance arrives.

Steps of Procedure for First Aid in Chest Pain due Other Causes

Step 1  Wash hands.

Skills: This is important to prevent cross contamination.

Step 2  Make the victim or volunteer to lie down. Assess and Identify Chest Pain due to other causes.

Skills: Make the person lie down as demonstrating the case of chest pain.
Step 3  Ask the person to rest and calm down and Call the ambulance.

**Skills:** Make the person to rest completely and not do anything. Provide a calm place to rest if possible. Loosen Constrictive clothing.

Step 4  Monitor the victim continuously.
Step 5  Perform secondary assessment and record and report.
Step 6  Transport to hospital as soon as the ambulance arrives.

### Check Your Progress 1
1) List the steps of procedure for first aid in Heart Attack.

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6.5 LET US SUM UP

Thus, in this unit we learnt about first aid management of person having chest pain due to various reasons. In the next practical unit, we shall discuss the practical skills required to give first aid to an victim of asthma.

6.6 KEYWORDS

Report : Give information about something

Cease : Stop

Differentiate : Find difference between

Constrictive : Tight, not loose

Support : Assist someone

Diagnosed: Medical problem already identified by doctor and the person is living with the problem.

6.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1) Steps of Procedure for First Aid in Chest Pain due to Myocardial Infarction (Heart Attack)

Step 1  Wash hands.

Step 2  Make the victim or volunteer to lie down.

Step 3  Ask the person to rest and calm down and Call the ambulance.
Step 4 Position the person in half sitting position and support back and head.

Step 5 Monitor the victim and be prepared to resuscitate as and when required.

Step 6 Perform secondary assessment and record and report.

Step 7 Transport to hospital as soon as the ambulance arrives.

6.8 ACTIVITIES

Activity 1
Enact a situation where your aunt has come to visit you on the weekend. Suddenly when walking upstairs she has a severe chest pain and stops to move forward on the stairs. You are able to see her facial gestures and rush to help her. She is a patient of Angina. How will you help her? Practice the first aid in this situation. Record it in your Log-Book.

(Self Activity)

Activity 2
Consider that you are in a flight when suddenly, one of the person complains of severe chest pain and heart burn. The air hostess announces for help. If you volunteer, what first aid will you give to the person? Practice and record in your log-book.

(Self Activity)

6.9 REFERENCES