

## CHEST TRAUMA

Twenty-five percent of all motor vehicle deaths are due to thoracic trauma. Rapid recognition and immediate treatment of chest injuries can prove to be life-saving.

- A. Perform **Initial Treatment / Universal Patient Care Protocol** and follow the proper protocol for medical management based on clinical presentation.
- B. Perform the following, if indicated:
  - 1. Stabilize flail segment of chest.
  - 2. Seal any open chest wounds by taping three (3) sides with an occlusive dressing or use an optional commercial chest seal.
  - 3. Stabilize any impaled objects.

If signs of a tension pneumothorax are present, (absent breath sounds and BP < 80 mm Hg) and patient has altered mental status, expedite transport and meet ALS en route.

- C. Transport immediately and consider ALS backup.

- D. Notify **Medical Command**.



**Note:**

- 1. Chest pain after trauma could be a sign of significant injury and not cardiac chest pain. Nitroglycerin **should not be used** without **MCP order**.
- 2. If tension pneumothorax develops in a patient with a sealed sucking chest wound, attempt to resolve by releasing air from the seal.