

ENVIRONMENTAL

Environmental emergencies, in some cases, can be slow and progressive or they can overtake people at a surprisingly rapid rate where the symptoms can be so severe that the patient will be unable to sense its onset in time to take proper action. When dealing with these types of emergencies, a history is critical to determine the extent of the exposure, what treatments must be started immediately and what problems can be expected during the crisis.

DROWNING

- How long was the patient under water for?
- What was the temperature of the water?
- Was it salt or fresh water (or contaminated water)?
- Did the patient dive into the water?
- What, if any, first aid was delivered?
- Was the patient rescued from the water by someone?

LIGHTNING INJURIES

- Was the patient out in the open?
- Was the patient wet?
- Was the patient holding on to any conductive material?
- Was there a loss of consciousness (if patient conscious now)? If so, for how long?

HEAT RELATED EXPOSURES

- What was the source of the heat exposure?
- How long was the patient exposed?
- What symptoms has the patient been displaying?
- What kind of activity was patient participating in, and for how long?
- Was there any seizure activity?
- What, if any, first aid was delivered?

HYPOTHERMIA

- How long was patient exposed to the cold?
- Was there any wind?
- Was patient adequately dressed for the weather?
- Was there any cold water immersion? (See also drowning)
- What, if any, first aid was delivered?
- Was there any alcohol consumption?
- Was there any drug (recreational or medical) consumption?