Shortness of Breath (S.O.B)

Module 13

Shortness of Breath (S.O.B)

Shortness of Breath
Acronym: P.A.S.T.E

P – Progression	Find out whether any external factor such as movement is making the situation better or worse
A – Associated Chest Pain	This will elicit descriptions of the patient's pain in and around chest area
S – Sputum Production (Color)	Is the patient coughing up sputum. Mucus-like sputum can be an indication of infection or any problem in respiratory system
T – Talking & Tiredness	Is the patient talking with you? Is the patient feeling tired, not talking or responding to your voice? If the patient is unconscious and not breathing, perform CPR immediately
E – Exercise Tolerance	Check whether the condition of the patient is worsening with time

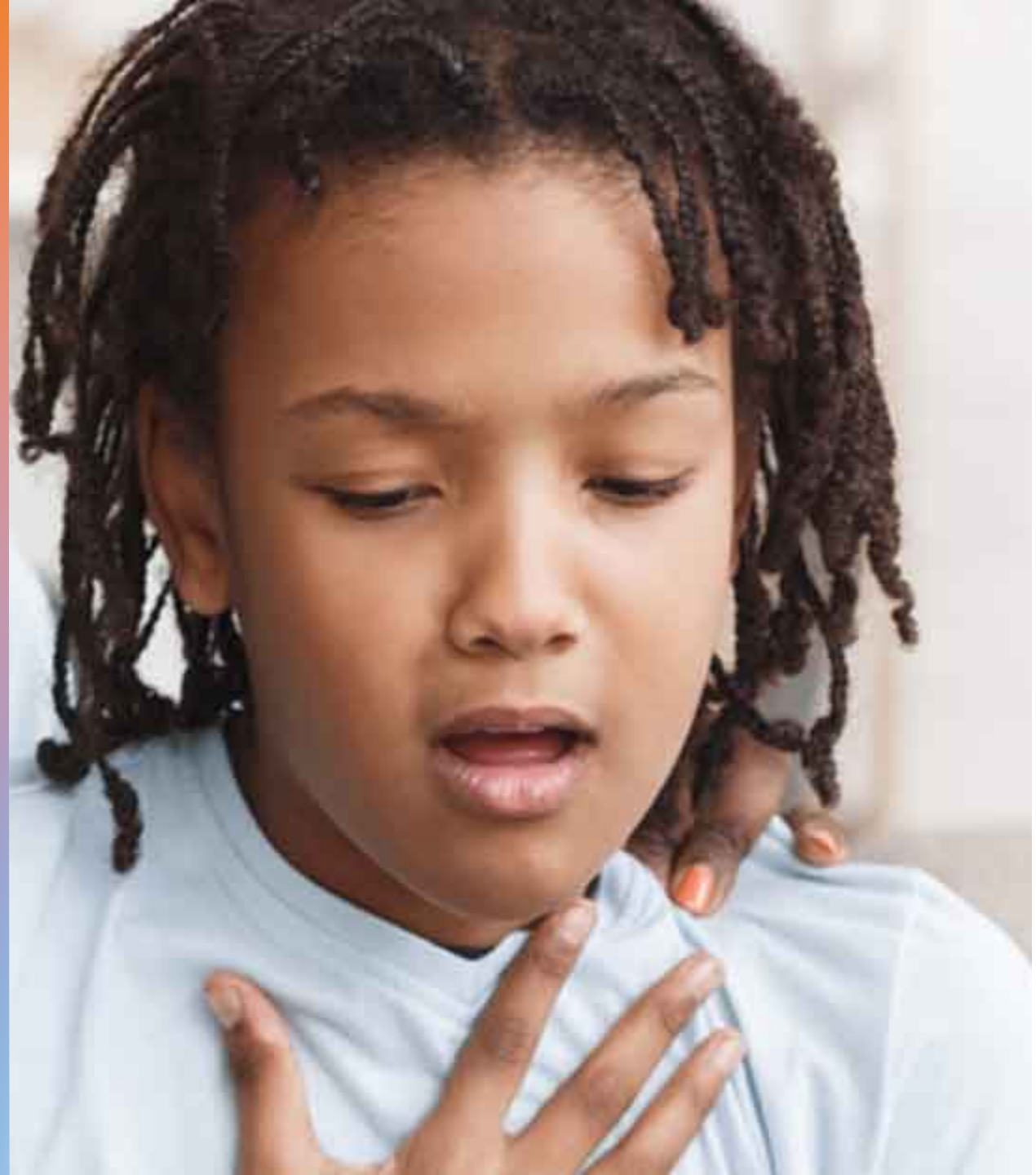
Asthma/Allergic Reaction (Anaphylaxis)

Asthma is a chronic inflammatory disorder of the airways that causes three primary changes in the lungs

- Inflammation (swelling) of the lining of the airways
- Bronchoconstriction (tightening of the bands of smooth muscles surrounding the airways) which reduces the width of the airways
- Excess mucus production that further narrows the airways

Asthma is an obstructive disease that may cause permanent changes (remodeling) if not properly treated. Asthma is a disease that cannot be cured but can be controlled.

Anaphylaxis is a severe, systemic allergic reaction characterized by multisystem involvement, including the skin, airway, vascular system, and gastrointestinal tract. Severe cases may result in complete obstruction of the airway, cardiovascular collapse, and death



Symptoms of Asthma/Allergic Reaction (Anaphylaxis)

Although symptoms may vary for each person with asthma, the primary symptoms of an asthma episode may include:

- Wheeze
- Cough
- Shortness of Breath
- Chest tightness
- Retractions

Epinephrine (Epi) Administration Protocol

1. Try to keep patient calm
2. Call 911 and Public Safety at (650) 738-7000
3. Try to identify cause (Etiology) and remove patient from allergen
4. Assist patient with Inhaler or Epinephrine Pen (EpiPen)
5. Have individual sit down or lie on floor
6. Stay with individual until EMS arrives
7. Monitor airway and breathing
8. Administer CPR if needed
9. Provide ambulance inhaler

Hyperventilation

- Hyperventilation is rapid or deep breathing, usually caused by anxiety or panic. This over breathing, as it is sometimes called, may actually leave you feeling breathless.
- When you breathe, you inhale oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide. Excessive breathing may lead to low levels of carbon dioxide in your blood, which causes many of the symptoms that you may feel if you hyperventilate.

Symptoms and Diagnosis of Hyperventilation

Associated symptoms include:

- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Shortness of breath
- Belching, bloating, dry mouth
- Weakness, confusion
- Sleep disturbances
- Numbness and tingling in your arms or around your mouth
- Muscle spasms in hands and feet, chest pain and palpitations

Hyperventilation Treatment Protocol

The goal in treating hyperventilation is to raise the carbon dioxide level in the blood. There are several ways to do this:

1. Reassure the patient by using a calming tone, and help them relax by using some of these phrases:
   - You are doing fine
   - You are not having a heart attack
   - You are not going to die
2. Have the patient slow their breathing to increase carbon dioxide and decrease oxygen:
   - **Do not** have them breathe into a bag
   - Have the patient breathe with you, as you slow your breathing to pace theirs.
   - If the patient is noticeably anxious about something that can be identified, try to sequester the patient, or remove the stimulus.
3. Call 911 and Public Safety immediately if conditions do not improve within a few minutes