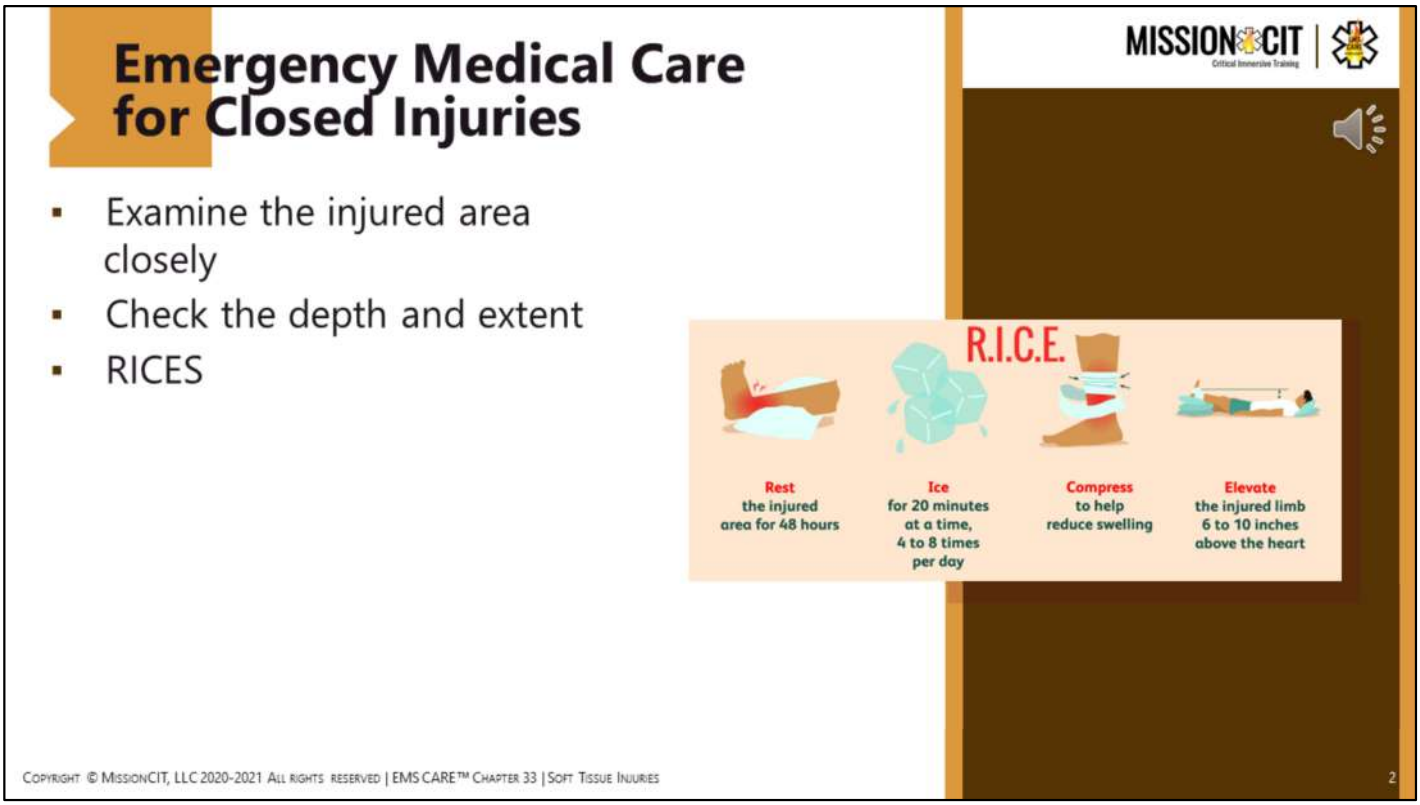


Thank you, Justin.

In this lesson, we will go into the specific emergency care treatment you can provide for patients with soft tissue injuries. So, let's get started!



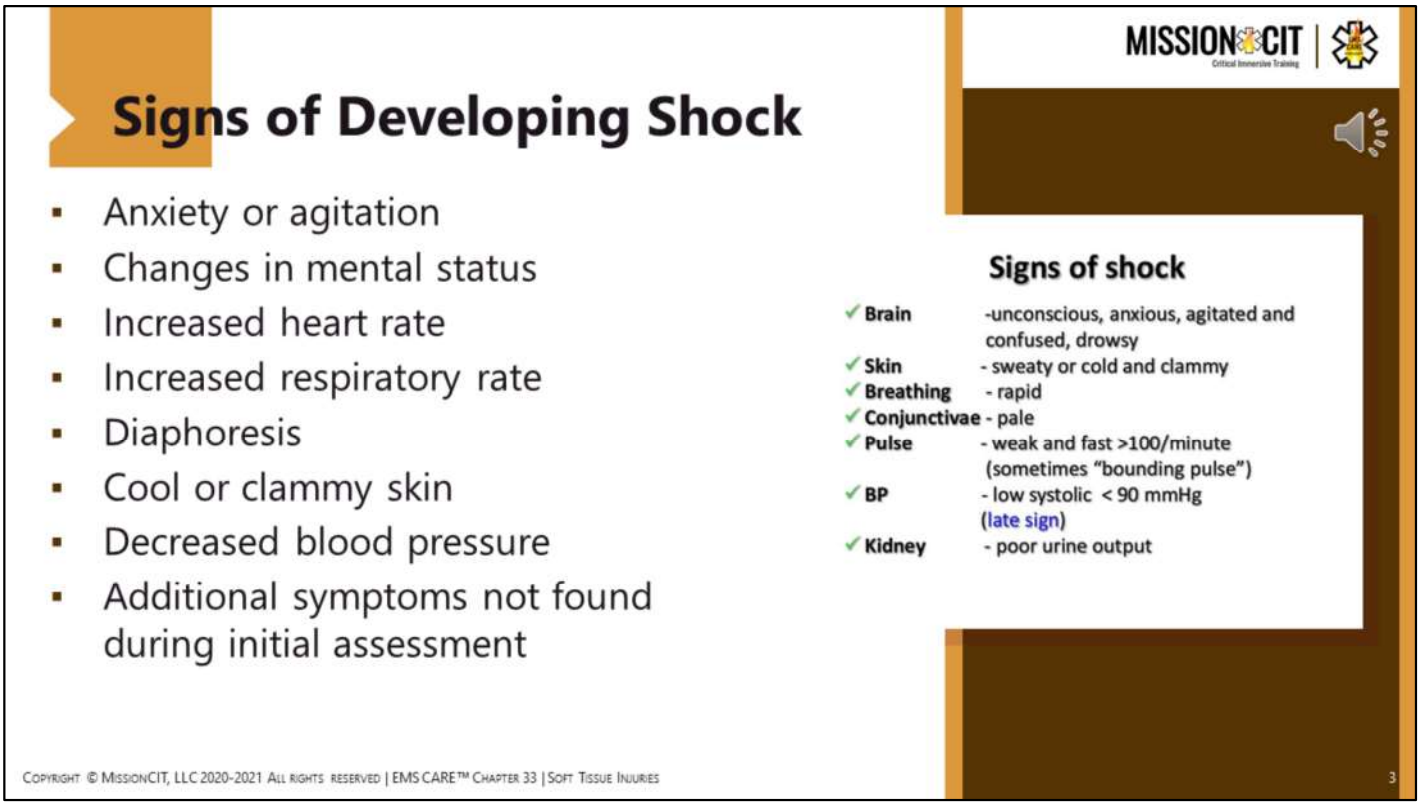
Closed injuries are usually harder to spot and are potentially the more serious type of soft tissue injuries.

So, make sure you examine the injured area closely and specifically, check for the depth and extent of the injury as serious injuries can cause the patient to go into a hypovolemic shock.

The treatment for closed injury is done using the RICES mnemonic, where,

- R stands for Rest
- I stands for Ice
- C stands for Compressions
- E stands for Elevation
- S stands for Splinting

Rest and Ice and elevation are standard first aid for minor injuries. Compression for bleed control and pain control should be a primary concern. Where splinting is also primary for pain and reduction of a larger injury. Note: RICES is not necessary in the order of application, it will be determined based on the severity of the injury.



As a part of emergency medical care, lookout for signs of shock. Shock should always be a primary concern and the onset of shock can be at any time during the call. These include,

- Anxiety or agitation
- Changes in mental status
- Increased heart rate
- Increased respiratory rate
- Diaphoresis
- Cool or clammy skin
- Decreased blood pressure
- Any changes of the above that were not present during the initial assessment should be a red flag.

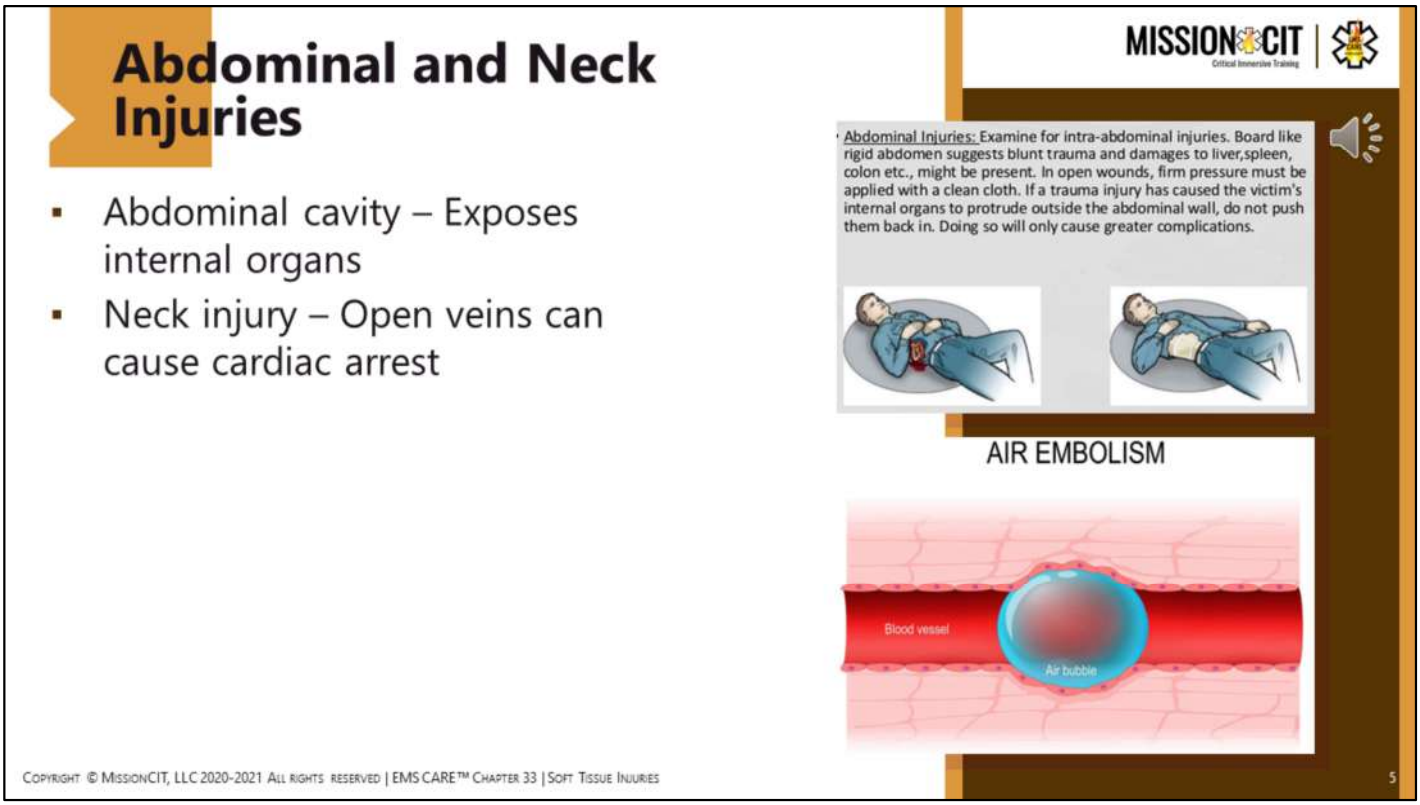


Moving on to open injuries, you must follow the standard safety precautions while handling open injuries. Make sure you wear PPE to protect yourself from pathogens and infectious diseases and consider all open wounds to be contaminated, so you will take the necessary precautions.

Look at the bleeding and immediately decide if it is life-threatening. In such a case, ask a team member to apply direct and even pressure on the wound, and keep the injured part elevated to reduce bleeding.

If there's bleeding in the extremities, that is the hands and legs, use a splint, even if there's no fracture. A splint is a piece of medical equipment that is used to keep an injured body part from moving, so there is no further damage to the area. You can also use tourniquets for the same reasons.

If the injury is on the chest, upper abdomen, or upper back, use an occlusive dressing. This is an air and water-tight dressing to provide a tight seal. An occlusive dressing will provide a barrier against pathogens and help prevent fluids, tissue or gas from escaping.



Open injuries can occur anywhere, depending on the mechanism of injury and the area that was exposed to it.

An abdominal wound is an injury in the abdominal cavity that could expose the internal organs. Typically, you can see organs protruding through the wound and this is called evisceration.

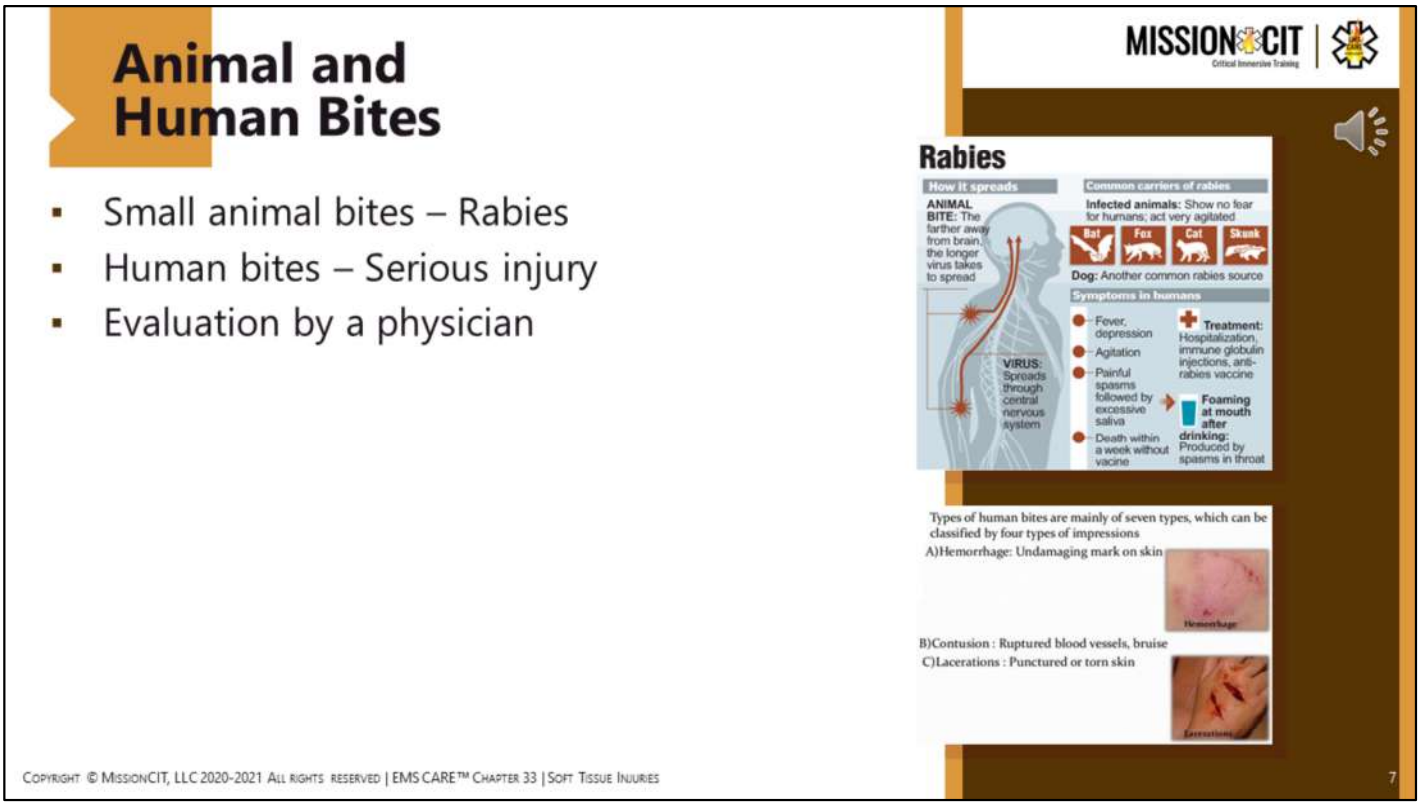
Open injuries on the neck are life-threatening as the open veins in the neck can suck in air and cause cardiac arrest. So, cover the wound with an occlusive dressing right away. Apply manual pressure and or a pressure dressing to control bleeding, but make sure not to compress both the carotid arteries at the same time. It should go without saying that nothing should be wrapped around the neck. A pressure dressing applied to the neck should cover the wound on the affected side and then under the arm on the unaffected side. If there is a large wound or bilateral wounds, more than one pressure dressing may be applied.

In any of these situations, apply a dry and sterile dressing, immobilize that area with a splint or a bandage, and transport the patient right away. Remember that a long board is the largest splint you have. You may utilize a long board or scoop stretcher for splinting in this application.



Impaled objects are items that have punctured the body's soft tissues and are still embedded. A good example would be bullets from a gun, an ice pick, or a fence post. As a rule, never try to remove an impaled object. The only time we would ever remove an impaled object is if the object is directly compromising breathing. Local protocols will be your guide here and we suggest checking with the medical direction before any object is moved or removed. Impaled objects should be splinted or bandaged in place to reduce further injury; the object maybe helping to occlude bleeding.

However, you can attempt to remove the impaled object if it is located on the cheek or mouth and obstructs the airway or if the object is in the chest and obstructs CPR. In all other situations, transport the patient immediately and document your findings.



A possible cause of open injury is bites from animals and even humans.

Small animal bites are a serious concern as the animal's mouth can be contaminated with virulent bacteria and this could cause serious injuries. A major concern in the United States is a condition called rabies that originates from the bites of small animals. This is an acute and potentially fatal viral infection of the central nervous system.

As for human bites, it can also result in a serious and quickly spreading infection as the human mouth contains a wide range of bacteria as well. For this reason, consider any human bite that has penetrated the skin as a serious injury.

All bites must be evaluated by a physician, so make that recommendation if the situation does not warrant emergency transport.



Rabies is an infectious viral disease that is almost always fatal once clinical symptoms appear. In most cases, the disease is transmitted to humans by the bite of a rabid dog, but infection can also spread through scratches or via saliva. Rabies kills one person every 9 minutes and children aged 5–14 years are frequent victims. Yet rabies is 100% vaccine preventable. Vaccinating dogs is the most cost-effective way to prevent rabies in people. Education about dog behaviour, immediate care measures after a bite, responsible dog ownership and bite prevention are essential components of rabies elimination. WHO and partners aim to achieve zero human rabies deaths by 2030. The time to act is now.

With this video, we come to the end of this lesson. Next, Justin will take you through another common soft-tissue injury, which is burns.