TITLE: GERIATRIC TRAUMA

PURPOSE:

Geriatric patients are defined as those patients greater than 65 years of age. Advanced patient age should lower the threshold for field triage directly to a Level I Trauma Center. In addition, pre-existing medical conditions in geriatric trauma patients adversely affects outcomes.

PROCESS:

I. ASSESSMENT
   A. Perform airway/breathing and circulation assessment while maintaining cervical immobilization when appropriate.
   B. Perform a secondary exam with a focus on identified areas of injury and potential areas of injury based upon the mechanism of injury.
   C. Assess previous medical and surgical history.
   D. Obtain appropriate imaging studies based upon clinical presentation, physical exam and history.
   E. Initiate appropriate I.V. access and therapy prescribed by a physician.
   F. Initiate appropriate surgical intervention as indicated.
   G. Document all assessment, prior medical history and chronic conditions on geriatric patients, as well as intervention in the appropriate EC medical record.
   H. Special consideration is given to the geriatric trauma patients > 70 years of age through inclusion in the Code II activation criteria.
II. GROUND LEVEL FALLS IN GERIATRIC PATIENTS
   A. This guideline is to help appropriately triage geriatric (age >55) ground level fall or “found down” patients.
   B. In addition to injury specific evaluation, geriatric patients with ground level falls should receive:
      1. CXR
      2. Pelvic X-ray
      3. FAST
      4. Labs should continue to include:
         a. base deficit
         b. lactate
         c. chem 7
         d. CBC
   C. If the BD is > -4 or the lactate is > 2.5 and there is no identified cause (i.e., serious injury, source of infection, toxins) the patient should be resuscitated with IV fluids and the labs repeated. A trauma consultation should be considered if the BD and lactate are persistently abnormal.

REFERENCE / BIBLIOGRAPHY:

3. Committee On Trauma American College of Surgeons. (2006). Resources For Optimal Care Of The Injured Patient. Pediatric Trauma Care (pp. 52). Chicago, IL.
Guidelines and Protocols

6. Konstantinos Spaniolas. Ground level falls are associated with significant mortality in elderly patients. J trauma 2010

OFFICE OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY:
LYNDON B. JOHNSON HOSPITAL TRAUMA SERVICES

REVIEW / REVISION HISTORY

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