

# The Canadian E.D. Triage and Acuity Scale

Patients should have an  
**INITIAL TRIAGE ASSESSMENT WITHIN 10 MINUTES\***  
of arrival



## TRIAGE LEVEL I - RESUSCITATION

Time to NURSE  
Assessment  
**IMMEDIATE\***



Time to PHYSICIAN  
Assessment  
**IMMEDIATE\***

USUAL PRESENTATION	SENTINEL DIAGNOSIS
Code / Arrest	Traumatic Shock
Major Trauma	Pneumothorax - Traumatic / Tension
Shock States	Facial Burns with Airway Compromise
Near Death Asthma	Severe Burns > 30% TBS
Severe Respiratory Distress	Overdose with Hypotension / Unconscious
Altered Mental State (unconscious, delirious)	AAA
Seizures	AMI with Complications / CHF / Low BP
	Status Asthmaticus
	Head Injury - Major / Unconscious
	Status Epilepticus

## TRIAGE LEVEL II - EMERGENT

Time to NURSE  
Assessment  
**IMMEDIATE\***



Time to PHYSICIAN  
Assessment  
**15 MINUTES\***

USUAL PRESENTATION	SENTINEL DIAGNOSIS
Head Injury (Risk Features ± Altered Mental State)	Head Injury
Severe Trauma	Trauma, Multiple Sites, Multiple Rib Fracture, Neck Injury / Spinal Cord
Altered Mental State (lethargic, drowsy, agitated)	
Chemical Exposure - Eyes	Alkaline / Caustic Ocular Burns
Allergic Reaction (Severe)	Anaphylaxis
Chest Pain • Visceral, Non-Traumatic	AMI, Unstable Angina, CHF, Chest Pain NOS, Gastroesophageal Reflux
• ± Associated Symptoms	Unspecified Drug / Medicinal Overdose, "d.t.'s"
Overdose (conscious), Drug Withdrawal	AAA, Appendicitis, Cholecystitis
ABD Pain (Age >50) with Visceral Symptoms	
Back Pain (Non Trauma, Not MSK)	Gastrointestinal Bleed, Hypotension
GI Bleed with Abnormal Vital Signs	CVA
CVA with Major Deficit	Severe Asthma
Asthma Severe (PEFR <40%)	COPD, Croup
Moderate / Severe Dyspnea / Difficulty Breathing	Spontaneous Abortion
Vaginal Bleeding • Acute, Pain scale >5	Ectopic Pregnancy / Rupture
• ± Abnormal Vital Signs	
Vomiting and/or diarrhea (with suspicion of dehydration)	
Signs of serious infection (purpuric rash, toxic)	
Chemotherapy or immunocompromised	Epiglottitis, Meningitis, Sepsis
Fever (age ≤ 3 months) Temp ≥ 38.0 (rectal)	Acute Psychotic Episode / Agitation
Acute Psychotic Episode / Extreme Agitation	Hypoglycemia, Diabetic Ketoacidosis, Hyperglycemia
Diabetes: Hypoglycemia, Hyperglycemia	Migraine
Headache (Pain Scale 8 - 10/10)	Renal Colic, LBP / Strain (Disc), Keratitis, Iritis
Pain Scale 8-10 (CVA, Back, Eye)	
Sexual Assault	
Neonate (≤ 7 days old)	

## TRIAGE LEVEL III - URGENT

Time to NURSE  
Assessment  
**30 MINUTES\***



Time to PHYSICIAN  
Assessment  
**30 MINUTES\***

USUAL PRESENTATION	SENTINEL DIAGNOSIS
Head Injury, Alert, Vomiting	Head Injury
Moderate Trauma	Anterior Dislocated Shoulder, Tibia / Fibula Fracture, Bimalleolar, Trimalleolar Ankle Fracture
Abuse / Neglect / Assault	
Vomiting and/or diarrhea (≤ 2 years)	
Dialysis problems	Pyelonephritis
Signs of Infection	Asthma without Status / COPD
Mild / Moderate Asthma (PEFR > 40%)	Bronchiolitis / Croup, Pneumonia
Mild / Moderate Dyspnea	Chest Pain NOS (MSK, GI, Resp)
Chest Pain • No Visceral Symptoms (Sharp/MSK)	
• No Previous Heart Disease	GI Bleed, No complications
GI Bleed with Normal Vital Signs	Spontaneous Abortion
Vaginal Bleeding Acute, Normal Vital Signs	Seizure
Seizure, Alert on Arrival	Acute Psychosis ± Suicidal Ideation
Acute Psychosis ± Suicidal Ideation	
Pain Scale 8 - 10 / 10 with minor injuries	Migraine, Renal Colic, LBP / Strain (Disc)
Pain Scale 4 - 7 / 10 (Headache, CVA, Back)	

## TRIAGE LEVEL IV - LESS URGENT

Time to NURSE  
Assessment  
**60 MINUTES\***



Time to PHYSICIAN  
Assessment  
**60 MINUTES\***

USUAL PRESENTATION	SENTINEL DIAGNOSIS
Head Injury, Alert, No Vomiting	Head Injury, Alert, No Vomiting
Minor Trauma	Colles Fracture, Ankle Sprain
ABD Pain (Acute)	Appendicitis, Cholecystitis
Earache	Otitis Media / Otitis Externa
Chest Pain, Minor Trauma or MSK, No Distress	Chest Pain NOS (MSK, GI, Resp), Gastroesophageal Reflux
Vomiting and diarrhea (>2 years/no dehydration)	
Suicidal Ideation / Depression	Suicidal Ideation / Depression
Allergic Reaction (Minor)	Urticaria
Corneal Foreign Body	Corneal Foreign Body
Back Pain (Chronic)	LBP / Strain
URI Symptoms	URI
Pain Scale 4 - 7	
Headache (Non Migraine / Not Sudden)	

## TRIAGE LEVEL V - NON URGENT

Time to NURSE  
Assessment  
**120 MINUTES\***



Time to PHYSICIAN  
Assessment  
**120 MINUTES\***

USUAL PRESENTATION	SENTINEL DIAGNOSIS
Minor Trauma, Not Necessarily Acute	LBP / Strain
Sore Throat, No Resp Symptoms	URI
Diarrhea alone (no dehydration)	Gastroenteritis
Vomiting alone normal mental status (no dehydration)	Vomiting
Menses	Disorders of Menstruation
Minor Symptoms	Dressing Changes
ABD Pain (Chronic)	Cast Changes
Psychiatric complaints	Constipation
Pain Scale < 4	Symptoms / Neurotic, Personality and Nonpsychotic Mental Disorders
	Unspecified Superficial Laceration(s)

\* **TIMES TO ASSESSMENT** are operating objectives, not established standards of care. Facilities without onsite physician coverage may meet assessment objectives using delegated protocols and remote communication.

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