

Panic Attack

Scenario Overview:

This scenario sees the first aiders deal with someone who is hyperventilating whilst having a panic attack. Setting the scene: A friend of the patient calls you over to her friend who appears to be having difficulty breathing. Because of the patient's breathing issues, the friend will be the first aiders' main source of information to begin with. The friend will be able to tell the first aiders that the patient had just received a phone call telling her that she'd lost her job and then shortly afterwards her friend had got really panicked and started breathing quicker and quicker.

Difficulty:

First Aider Easy

How the scenario should progress:

Hopefully the first aiders will help calm and reassure the patient and help her to get a breathing back to normal. In which case, the patient will improve. If they do not try and calm the patient down and to slow her breathing then the patient will lose consciousness for a short period of time.

Actor Tips:

Try to act the quick breathing but make sure you don't do it too much and make yourself dizzy! Be really flustered and upset but do allow the first aiders to calm you...although this might take time.

Patient 1:

Name: Alice Edwards **Age:** 19 **Sex:** Female

Medication:

'Hay-fever meds'

Allergies:

Seafood

Past medical/family/social history:

Suffers from hay-fever but otherwise usually fit and well. Has been under a lot of stress recently with troubles of work and struggles to earn enough money to feed her children (x2). She is a single parent.

Findings on examination:

Initially finding it very difficult to talk and can only get the odd word out. The patient is very flustered and panicked. The patient will try and cooperate with the first aiders although keeps getting panicked again. Once the first aiders have tried calming them down and helped them to slow their breathing down, the breathing will become more normal although the patient will still be upset. After a while of being calmed down, the patient will effectively be back to normal. No injuries present. Breathing difficulties started up after phone call because she started thinking about how she could get enough money to look after her children and was scared they'd be taken away into care if she couldn't look after them. Patient feels dizzy whilst hyperventilating,

Possible treatment from first aiders:

Reassurance. Coaching help to slow breathing down. Perhaps walking the patient to a quieter location depending on the environment you are in.

Time after start: 0 mins | After calmed

Response:	Alert	Alert
Airway:	Yes	Yes
Respirations:	28 short	19
Pulse:	125	105
Oxygen Sats:	89	95