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# National Guideline for the Field Triage of Injured Patients 2021

**ACS** / AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

# National Guideline for the Field Triage of Injured Patients

## RED CRITERIA

### High Risk for Serious Injury

#### Injury Patterns

- Penetrating injuries to head, neck, torso, and proximal extremities
- Skull deformity, suspected skull fracture
- Suspected spinal injury with new motor or sensory loss
- Chest wall instability, deformity, or suspected flail chest
- Suspected pelvic fracture
- Suspected fracture of two or more proximal long bones
- Crushed, degloved, mangled, or pulseless extremity
- Amputation proximal to wrist or ankle
- Active bleeding requiring a tourniquet or wound packing with continuous pressure

#### Mental Status & Vital Signs

##### All Patients

- Unable to follow commands (motor GCS < 6)
- RR < 10 or > 29 breaths/min
- Respiratory distress or need for respiratory support
- Room-air pulse oximetry < 90%

##### Age 0-9 years

- SBP < 70mm Hg + (2 x age in years)

##### Age 10-64 years

- SBP < 90 mmHg or
- HR > SBP

##### Age ≥ 65 years

- SBP < 110 mmHg or
- HR > SBP

*Patients meeting any one of the above RED criteria should be transported to the highest-level trauma center available within the geographic constraints of the regional trauma system*

## YELLOW CRITERIA

### Moderate Risk for Serious Injury

#### Mechanism of Injury

- High-Risk Auto Crash
  - Partial or complete ejection
  - Significant intrusion (including roof)
    - >12 inches occupant site OR
    - >18 inches any site OR
    - Need for extrication for entrapped patient
  - Death in passenger compartment
  - Child (age 0-9 years) unrestrained or in unsecured child safety seat
  - Vehicle telemetry data consistent with severe injury
- Rider separated from transport vehicle with significant impact (eg, motorcycle, ATV, horse, etc.)
- Pedestrian/bicycle rider thrown, run over, or with significant impact
- Fall from height > 10 feet (all ages)

#### EMS Judgment

##### Consider risk factors, including:

- Low-level falls in young children (age ≤ 5 years) or older adults (age ≥ 65 years) with significant head impact
- Anticoagulant use
- Suspicion of child abuse
- Special, high-resource healthcare needs
- Pregnancy > 20 weeks
- Burns in conjunction with trauma
- Children should be triaged preferentially to pediatric capable centers

**If concerned, take to a trauma center**

*Patients meeting any one of the YELLOW CRITERIA WHO DO NOT MEET RED CRITERIA should be preferentially transported to a trauma center, as available within the geographic constraints of the regional trauma system (need not be the highest-level trauma center)*