

Medical Emergency

Autonomic Dysreflexia

- keep this card with you -

Autonomic dysreflexia (AD) is an emergency and can be fatal if you have a spinal cord injury at or above T6.

Common Causes

- Full bladder
- Bladder infection
- Full bowel (constipation)
- Pressure sore
- Tight clothing or shoes
- Ingrown toenails
- Anything painful
- Genital stimulation

Watch for 1 or More Signs

- Sudden sharp rise in blood pressure
- Pounding headache
- Flushing
- Sweating
- Slow pulse rate
- Chills
- Goose bumps
- Stuffy nose
- Anxious feeling

What to Do

- Sit up.
- Find source of irritation:
 - Remove tight clothing.
 - Catheterize: put lidocaine gel in urethra, wait 5 minutes, then catheterize.
 - Check stool: insert generous amount of lidocaine gel into rectum, wait 5 minutes, then check for stool. If stool is there, gently do bowel program.
 - Check for ingrown toenails, pressure sores, or skin breaks.
- Take medicine ordered by doctor.
- **Call your doctor or go to the ED right away.**

My Information

Name _____

Medical History

Baseline blood pressure: _____

Baseline body temp: _____

Location of injury: _____

Primary healthcare provider:

Provider phone number:

Allergies:

Emergency Contact

In case of emergency, call:

Relationship:

Phone number:

If cannot reach first contact, call:

Relationship:

Phone number:



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