

Adult Triage Criteria

(Adapted from the Canadian ED Triage and Acuity Scale)

LEVEL I: RESUSCITATION

Conditions that are life or limb threatening (or with imminent risk of deterioration) needing immediate aggressive intervention.

Time to doctor: IMMEDIATE

Usual presentations:

1. Cardiac and/or pulmonary arrest
2. Major trauma
3. Shock states
4. Unconscious patients
5. Severe respiratory distress
6. Status epilepticus
7. Acute coronary syndrome/ chest pain
8. CVA / stroke
9. DKA/ HHS
10. Shock states (Trauma haemorrhagic / septic shock)
 - BP <90/60
 - Temp <36.0C or >38.0C
 - PR <60bpm or >100bpm
 - RR <10bpm or >24bpm
11. Hypertensive Emergencies
 - BP >180/110mmHg with blurred vision / vomiting / CVA / confusion
12. GI bleed
13. Severe asthmatic attack
 - SpO2 <90%
 - Single word speech
 - Confusion
 - Silent chest
14. Deranged blood glucose levels (<3mmol/l or >18mmol/l with confusion / seizures / diaphoresis)
15. Pregnancy related complications
 - Presenting fetal parts
 - Prolapsed cord
 - Vaginal bleeding (esp. 3rd trimester except show)
 - Absent fetal movements
 - Eclampsia
16. Severe head injury (GCS: 3-8/15)
17. Drug / substance abuse / intoxication with haemodynamic instability

TRIAGE I RESUSCITATION

0

IMMEDIATE

LEVEL II: EMERGENT

Conditions that are potential threat to life, function or limb, requiring rapid medical intervention.

Time to doctor < 15min

Usual presentations:

1. Altered mental state
2. Head injury (mild / moderate with GCS of 9-15)
3. Neonates
4. Eye pain/ injuries
5. Drug and/or substance overdose / intoxication / withdrawal with stable vitals
6. Asthma (moderate)
7. Anaphylaxis
8. Heavy vaginal bleeding / acute pelvic or lower abdominal pain
9. Sepsis/pyrexia
10. Severe vomiting and/or diarrhoea (haemodynamically unstable)
11. Acute psychosis / extreme agitation
12. Severe abdominal / groin pain / acute abdomen
13. Severe hypertension or hypotension (BP > 180/110 mmHg or < 90/60 mmHg)
14. Abuse / neglect / assault (physical / sexual)
15. Patients on chemotherapy
16. Acute pain - severe (pain score 8-10/10)
17. Seizure disorder

TRIAGE II EMERGENT

15
MINUTES

LEVEL III: URGENT

Conditions could potentially progress to a serious problem requiring emergency intervention. May be associated with significant discomfort or affecting ability to function at work or activities of daily living.

Time to doctor < 30min

Usual presentations:

1. Asthma, mild
2. Acute pain - moderate (pain score 4-7/10)
3. Vomiting or diarrhoea with dehydration
4. Dialysis(or transplantation patients)
5. Other diabetic - associated conditions e.g. neuropathy, nephropathy, retinopathy.

TRIAGE III URGENT

30
MINUTES

LEVEL IV: LESS URGENT

Conditions could potentially progress to a serious problem requiring emergency intervention. May be associated with significant discomfort or affecting ability to function at work or activities of daily living.

Time to doctor ≤ 1 hour

Usual presentations:

1. Minor trauma with soft tissue injuries
2. Headache (pain score 0-3/10)
3. Ear ache
4. Back pain, chronic
6. URTI symptoms with fever
7. Vomiting and/or diarrhoea with no signs of dehydration
8. Acute pain - mild (pain score 0-3/10)

TRIAGE IV LESS URGENT

1

HOUR

LEVEL V: NOT URGENT

Problem with or without evidence of deterioration.

Time to doctor ≤ 2 hours

Usual Presentations:

1. Sore Throat/URTI without fever
2. Abdominal pain without vomiting
3. Diarrhoea or vomiting alone without dehydration

TRIAGE V NON URGENT

2

HOURS