



Occupational risks for EMTs and Paramedics involved in Parkland College EMS programs



EMTs and Paramedics, including students in Parkland College's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) programs, face several significant occupational risks due to the demanding and unpredictable nature of their work.

Here are some key risks:

- **Musculoskeletal Injuries:**
 - Sprains and strains are the most common injuries, especially to the back and trunk.
 - These often result from overexertion and bodily reactions, with lifting, carrying, and transferring patients and equipment being major contributing factors.
- **Exposure to Harmful Substances:** EMTs are frequently exposed to potentially infectious materials (like bodily fluids) and hazardous environments. Parkland College's program handbook highlights the importance of using appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) like gloves, N95 respirators, face shields, and gowns to mitigate these risks.
- **Violence and Assaults:** EMTs face a higher risk of assaults compared to other private industry workers.
- **Transportation-Related Incidents:** While transportation-related incidents are the leading cause of EMT fatalities, they also contribute to non-fatal injuries.
- **Falls, Slips, and Trips:** These are also a significant cause of injury among EMTs.
- **Stress and Fatigue:** Irregular and long work shifts can disrupt sleep patterns and lead to chronic fatigue, negatively impacting an EMT's physical and mental well-being. Parkland College emphasizes the importance of managing stress and functioning effectively in critical situations as part of their program's essential qualifications.
- **Mental and Behavioral Challenges:** Parkland College's EMS program recognizes the need for students to adapt to changing and unexpected situations while maintaining emotional control under stress. Parkland College offers supportive counseling through the Counseling Support Center and is free to currently enrolled students. The Counseling Support Center offers short-term, solution-focused, and confidential mental health counseling is available for currently enrolled students. Students experiencing significant distress are seen as soon as possible.
 - **Counseling Services contact information:**

Office: [U-267](#)

Phone: [217/351-2219](tel:2173512219)

Fax: 217/373-3831

email: counselingservices@parkland.edu

Web Link: [Counseling Support Center](#)

Important note: Parkland College, like other institutions, emphasizes safety and prepares students to address these risks through training, guidelines, and access to resources. They also have essential qualification requirements for students entering the program, emphasizing their ability to handle the physical and emotional demands of the profession.