

Beyond Agitated Delirium: Dealing with the Issue of In- Custody Deaths

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In Custody Death

- ▶ In custody
 - Police hold
 - Field
 - Hospital
 - Holding cell
 - Jail
 - Prison



Inside are dozens of metal cages. They are made out of chain link fence material and topped by rolls of barbed wire.
CBS



Case # 1

- ▶ 34 year old male
- ▶ Screaming naked in the front yard
- ▶ 911 called
 - Law enforcement
- ▶ 8 officers
 - Tased
 - IV valium
- ▶ Unresponsive
- ▶ Pronounced in the ED



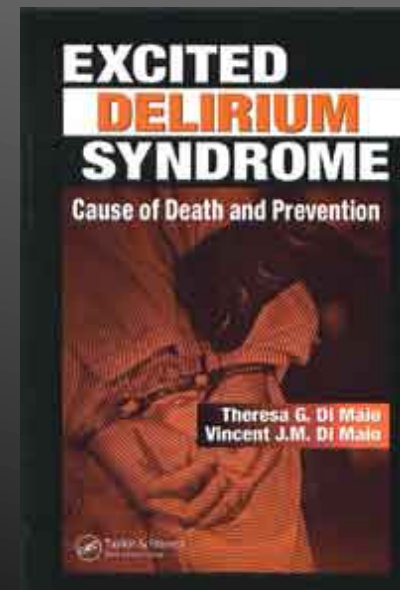
Case # 2

- ▶ 24 year old female
- ▶ Moderate mechanism MVA
- ▶ Evaluated in the ED
- ▶ Sent to jail
- ▶ Complained of weakness and abdominal pain in jail over an 8 hour period
- ▶ Found in cardiac arrest the next morning



Causes

- ▶ Excited delirium
 - “Medical emergency that presents as a law enforcement problem”
- ▶ Positional asphyxia
- ▶ Less lethal methods
- ▶ Missed injuries
- ▶ Other



Challenges – Excited Delirium

- ▶ Violent irrational individual
- ▶ High risk situation
- ▶ Life-threatening medical emergency
- ▶ Resistant to standard control measures
- ▶ Increased struggle = increased problems
- ▶ Safety of others
- ▶ Intense public scrutiny afterwards



Team Approach

- ▶ EMS
 - Dispatch
- ▶ Medical oversight
- ▶ Emergency Medicine
- ▶ Law enforcement
 - Police
 - Sheriffs
- ▶ Medical examiner
 - Coroner
- ▶ City attorney



Issues

- ▶ Multi-disciplinary approach
 - Multi-factorial problem
- ▶ Sedation protocols
 - Well defined
 - IV, IN, IM
 - Well understood
- ▶ Less lethal methods
 - Taser
 - Others



Issues

- ▶ Policies/procedures
 - Watch in jail?
 - Can they “return”?
 - Impact on others
- ▶ Excited delirium
 - Hypoglycemia?
 - Post-ictal?
 - Protocol?
- ▶ Media
 - Who will speak?
 - For whom?



Three Cs

- ▶ Communicate
- ▶ Cooperate
- ▶ Commitment



Conclusions

- ▶ Think about this now
- ▶ Have the right people at the table
- ▶ Ultimate goal is prevention

