SALT Triage

REFRESHER

RECOGNIZE IT

- SALT is the triage system for a multi-casualty event — patients exceed day-to-day operating capability
- SALT = Sort, Assess, Lifesaving interventions, Treatment/Transport (Mercy Policy 2-13)
- MCI levels: Level 1 ≈ 5–14 patients, Level 2 ≈ 15–50, Level 3 = 50+ patients

ASSESS

- Global sorting first: 'Everyone who can walk, move to a designated area' — that group is assessed last
- Next: patients who wave or make purposeful movement are assessed second
- Still patients and obvious life threats are assessed first
- Individual assessment: peripheral pulse? Breathing without distress? Hemorrhage controlled? Follows commands or purposeful? Likely to survive given available resources?

ACT — FIRST MOVES

1. First arriving unit begins triage using the SALT algorithm; notify communications to create an MCI alert, with estimated patient count and needs
2. Sort globally (walk / wave / still), then assess in that priority order
3. Give lifesaving interventions before assigning a category: control major hemorrhage, open the airway, decompress the chest, give antidote autoinjectors
4. Assign the category: Red — Immediate, Yellow — Delayed, Green — Minor/walking wounded, Grey — Expectant, Black — Deceased
5. Mark initial acuity with colored tape at the crisis site; triage tags go on at the casualty collection point or during transport

PEARLS

- Lifesaving interventions come before the category, not after it
- A patient with no signs of life after airway opening is Deceased; one unlikely to survive with available resources is Expectant (Grey)
- Retriage: categories change as resources and the patient change

Take Home Message:

Sort first, save lives second, categorize third: SALT — global sorting, lifesaving interventions, then Red, Yellow, Green, Grey, Black.