



## Clinical Rotation Tips

**Note: This is only meant to help you on your rotation. It does not replace the requirements stated in your Clinical Guidelines Manual or Student Handbook**

- Remember what made you become an EMT. Take care of your patient—sometimes it's the ABCs but sometimes it is holding a hand, or listening, or offering a shoulder to cry on.
- Whatever you put into your clinical rotations is what you'll get. Show initiative. Don't hold up the wall. Preceptors remember the students that stand out and take initiative. So when the awesome trauma victim comes in, they will pick you instead of the other student that doesn't care.
- Get in there and do as much as you're comfortable with, then do a little more. Don't just watch.
- While at the ER, if a bed needs to be made, make it. If the room needs to be cleaned, clean it. Ask the nurse or tech if he/she needs help transporting a patient. Take vital signs on all new patients coming into the ER and assist them into a gown.
- If the Charge Nurse assigns you to triage, go to triage. If it gets slow up there, ask the triage nurse if you can go to the back and assist with patients there. Try to figure out which nurses and/or ER Techs are student friendly and follow them around.
- Pay attention and ask whatever questions you have, no matter how unimportant you may feel the question is.
- Take criticism well, be early, be nice, be involved, stay calm, and remember to be courteous to family /other EMS, listen and learn, have fun!
- Immediately ask what the expectations of the folks you'll be riding with are. Some will want you to dive right in, others prefer if you hang back a bit and observe.
- Never assume anything. If you're unsure, ask as many questions as you can. The more you ask, the more you learn on your ride-along.





- Have fun and get involved. Buy kolaches. Kidding ... no, really, buy kolaches. It's a great ice breaker and EMS folks like to eat.
- Learn where everything is located inside the ambulance and the jump bag. Knowing where stuff is before a call saves time.
- Don't lie to the medics. If you don't know, say so. If you can't hear a BP, say so. They expect you to be green. But never, ever lie.
- It's very easy to get tunnel vision if you are only listening to dispatch. Get the address, listen to what dispatch has to say, but remember they are not there, they are repeating what they were told. Be ready for anything!
- Leave any preconceived notions at the door. We come in all shapes and sizes. We all have something to teach even if it's how not to do something. Don't be afraid to ask questions. I've always told students I may not be able to answer right then but ask anyway.
- The real world is not like the classroom; no call will go just like the book says it should. Take this into consideration and be open to learning "alternate" but still correct ways to care for your patients.
- Be the sponge—take in everything.
- If it's wet, sticky and not yours, don't touch it!
- Do everything they'll let you do and pee when you can.
- Do not get emotionally attached to the situation. You're sometimes seeing people at their worst.
- The 3 H's—be HUMBLE, be HELPFUL, be HONEST.
- You have 2 eyes, 2 ears and only 1 mouth—use them proportionately.

