

# Altered Level of Consciousness

For on site tutorials as part of the remote simulation program  
Professional Entry Module: UG3

*This project was possible due to funding made available by Health Workforce Australia*

# Sponsor

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# Session Objectives

## Clinical practice

- Assess the patient using DRS ABCDEFG
- Implement initial interventions and investigations
- Seek advice

## Teamwork

- Handover using the ISBAR tool

# ISBAR

Identify

Situation

Background

Assessment

Recommendation



You are called to see Miley Cyrus who is a 48 year women admitted with acute ascites. She has had 5.5 litres drained in the preceding 24 hours and 200mls of 20% albumin administered. Her relative has caught your attention as they have asked you for some help. They say Miley has just had a fit.

**DRS ABCDE**  
**(DEFG)**



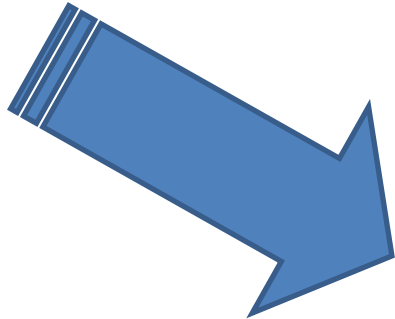
# Let's go see Miley





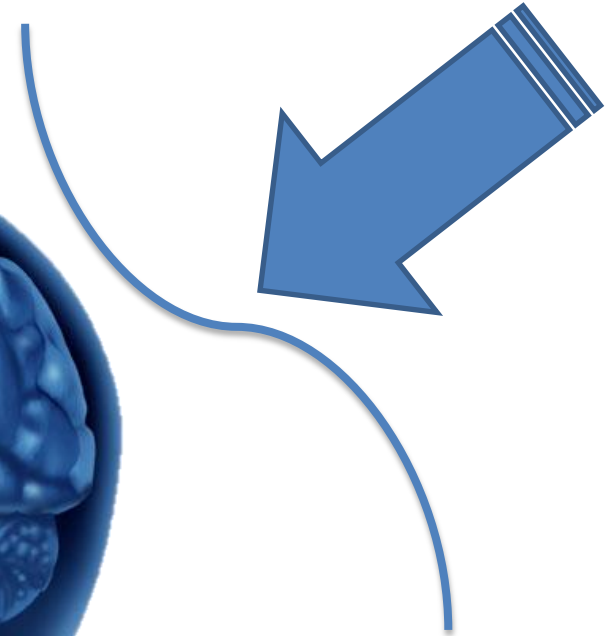
# The unconscious patient

**DIRECT**



# CAUSES

**INDIRECT**



- **TRAUMA**
- **INFECTION**
- **HAEMORRHAGE**
- **SPACE OCCUPYING LESIONS**
- **SEIZURES**
- **DRUGS**



- **RESPIRATORY**
- **CIRCULATORY**
- **METABOLIC**
- **ENDOCRINE**



# Interventions & Investigations

## Simple

- 12 Lead ECG
- Bloods: FBC, EUC, LFT, gasses  
Coags, culture, drug screen
- Urinalysis, Urine toxicology screen
- Chest X-Ray

## Advanced

- CT Brain
- EEG

**DRS ABCDE  
(DEFG)**



# Seizures

**DRS ABCDE  
(DEFG)**



- Protect the airway
- Position the patient
- Supplemental O<sup>2</sup>
- Attach monitoring
- Start an IV
- Check the glucose
- Stop the seizure
- Seek advice

# Alcohol withdrawal

- Assess risk in all patients
- Delirium Tremens
  - DRS ABCDE (DEFG)
  - Restraint – security/pharmacology
- Supportive care
- Diazepam
- Thiamine +/- glucose

**DRS ABCDE  
(DEFG)**



# Stroke

- Protect the airway
- Position the patient
- Supplemental O<sup>2</sup>
- Attach monitoring
- Start an IV
- Check the glucose
- Manage the BP
- Treat seizures
- Seek advice

**DRS ABCDE  
(DEFG)**



# Meningitis

**DRS ABCDE  
(DEFG)**



- Protect yourself -PPE
- Blood cultures
- Lumbar puncture if **NO** signs of raised intracranial pressure
- Commence antibiotics
  - Cefotaxime/ceftriaxone+benzylpenicillin
  - ?acyclovir?
- Treat seizures
- Maintain euglycaemia
- Supportive care
- Public health implications?

# Summary

- Structured approach to the patient with an altered LOC
  - DRS ABCDE (DEFG)
  - Multidisciplinary team based approach
- Many potential causes
  - Pathologies **directly/indirectly** affecting the brain
- Communication
  - Patient
  - Team
  - Senior help!

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## Acknowledgments

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