

T H E **J O B** C E N T E R

EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN



Emergency medical technicians provide immediate care to accident victims. They stabilize the victims, then move them to medical facilities for further treatment.

Emergency medical technicians respond to emergency calls for help from people suffering from unexpected illness or injury.

EMTs are trained to give immediate care in a variety of urgent situations — car accidents, heart attacks, poisonings — and are responsible for transporting the victims to a medical facility for further treatment. They usually transport patients by ambulance, helicopter, or other emergency vehicle.

At the scene of an emergency, EMTs, who usually work in teams of two, check the patient's injuries or illness to determine the severity of the situation. They give the patient emergency care, which may include restoring breathing, stopping the blood flow from a wound and bandaging it, treating shock, or delivering a baby. When transporting a patient to a medical facility, the EMTs monitor the patient's vital signs and give additional care as needed.

EMTs must be quick thinkers and effective communicators. Once they arrive at the hospital with a trauma patient, EMTs must be able to quickly and

accurately describe the patient's injury or illness to emergency room doctors or nurses who will be taking over treatment.

EMTs have different classifications, depending on their level of training. EMT-Basics can perform emergency procedures that require basic skills such as dressing wounds or immobilizing fractures.

EMT-Intermediates have more advanced training. They can administer intravenous fluids, use defibrillators to shock a stopped heart, and conduct other life-support procedures.

EMT-Paramedics can do the same things as EMT-Basics and EMT-Intermediates, but they can also administer drugs, perform endotracheal intubations, and use complex medical equipment at the scene of an emergency. Paramedic training programs usually takes two years of classroom work, followed by on-the-job work with experienced EMT-Paramedics.

Some EMTs work for hospital trauma centers. Others are employed by fire departments, police rescue squads, or private ambulance services.

victim was blue from the neck up and had no pulse. He began to perform CPR on the accident victim. Luckily, Herrholz was able to put his training to good use and he saved the victim's life.

"Being back in the field, the hours, the benefits, and the flexibility," Herrholz says are several reasons why he loves his job. He also explains that the job is not boring and he goes to different locations everyday.

The best advice Herrholz has for anyone wanting to go into the EMT field is to "know what you're getting into." He explains that getting a job in the EMT field is not like the normal job process so, "be patient and the right opportunity will come along."

SKILLS REQUIRED

EMTs must be in good physical condition and be able to remain calm in stressful, life-or-death situations.

WHERE/HOW TO GET TRAINING

Schooling

EMTs must have formal training. Police, fire, and health departments and hospitals offer training, as do some colleges, technical schools, and universities. EMTs in fire and police departments must be qualified as firefighters or police officers. EMT-Basics must have 100 to 120 hours of classroom instruction plus 10 internship hours in a hospital emergency room and 20 to 50 hours on field rescue or with ambulance companies. This includes instruction and practice in handling bleeding, fractures, obstructed airways, cardiac arrest, and emergency childbirth. EMT-Basics also learn to use common emergency equipment such as splints and stretchers. EMT-Intermediate training includes 35 to 55 hours of additional instruction in advanced life-support skills. EMT-Paramedic training re-quires about 750 to 2,000 hours of classroom instruction, clinical training, and

supervised fieldwork. EMTs at all levels must take refresher and continuing education courses. All 50 states have a certification process; some states require EMTs to register with the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians.

Financial Aid

Grants, scholarships, loans, and work/study programs are available for students. For most of this aid, prospective students must submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid, available from high school guidance offices and post-secondary financial aid offices. For more information on federal financial aid programs, visit the U.S. Department of Education's Web site at <http://www.ed.gov>.



For more information on federal financial aid programs, call (800) 4FEDAID

FUTURE JOB OPPORTUNITIES

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, job opportunities for qualified EMTs are expected to be excellent, especially in hospitals and with private

ambulance services. Employment of EMTs is expected to grow much faster than average for all occupations through the year 2008.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Most EMTs wear uniforms while on the job. They must be ready to react to emergency situations at a moment's notice,

making this an often-stressful occupation.

RESOURCES - HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

BOOK:

EMS Stress: An Emergency Responder's Handbook for Living Well by Ray Shelton and Jack Kelly

ONLINE:

<http://www.naemt.org> (National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians)

GENERAL:

National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians
6610 Busch Blvd.
P.O. Box 29233
Columbus, OH 43229-0233
www.nremt.org

LOCAL:

Career Counselor, Kathy Matthews, 941-752-8100 ext. 227

YOU HAVE THE POWER

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JOBS IN THIS FIELD

Job titles	Place of work	Kind of work	Average salary*
EMT-Basic	Scenes of emergencies, hospital	Treats trauma victims by stabilizing them; stops bleeding wounds; assists in childbirth; transports victims to medical facility.	\$17,930-\$29,270
EMT-Paramedic	Scenes of emergencies, hospital	In addition to above duties, also administers drugs, performs endotracheal intubations, and uses complex medical equipment.	\$24,800-\$37,760

*Salaries may vary depending on region and experience. Some EMTs are volunteers. Earnings depend on the employment setting (hospital, emergency service department, ambulance service) and geographic location as well as individual training and experience. EMTs in fire departments earn the highest salaries (\$37,690 for EMT-Paramedics, \$28,667 for EMT-Intermediate, and \$33,962 for EMT-Basic). Sources: U.S. Department of Labor.