

#### Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center

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#### Defensive Tactics: Basic Positions, Stances, and Takedowns

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#### Defensive Tactics: Basic Positions, Stances, and Takedowns

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#### Defensive Tactics: Basic Positions, Stances, and Takedowns

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# **Objectives**

- 1. Recognize a tactical mindset for healthcare personnel in at-risk situations.
- 2. Identify preparedness for a potential encounter with healthcare-related violence.
- 3. Indicate defensive actions to violent attacks during emergency medical responses.

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# **Tactical Mindset**

- HOW we view our surroundings must change to increase our potential for surviving attacks
- <u>Be aware of all people you encounter</u>: Let them SEE that you are aware of them. A large percentage of attacks are those of opportunity and can be thwarted simply by letting the would-be attacker know you are aware of them. This increases the degree of difficulty to the attacker and often dissuades them. As simple as that sounds, it is true.
- <u>Be aware of the environment</u>: If you are dealing with a patient in a room, position yourself where you have an optimal view of the room and any doors where surprise attacks could come from. Don't put yourself in a position with no escape route!
- This applies beyond our jobs to everyday life

#### **Interview Stance**

- A standing position that allows you to be prepared without looking aggressive
- How
- legs slightly bladed (dominant side slightly back from non-dominant side)
- hands in front of xiphoid process
  - dominant hand on bottom
  - clasp hands together NOT with fingers laced like holding our own hand

#### **Interview Stance**

- Why
- leg placement is for balance you have more lateral stability to defend against a shove
- if you carry a weapon your leg bladed behind is to protect your weapon
- hand placement: your hands in front of your xiphoid process protects you from being winded if someone punches you – your dominant hand on bottom keeps your dominant hand from being grabbed, keeping it available to throw a punch or grab your weapon
- interview stance puts you in perfect position to use a wedge block against punches

# **Collapsed Knee Leg-Kick Block**

#### • How

- from the interview stance, collapse either the lead leg or back leg inward
- immediately reset and return to a fighting stance afterwards
- Why
  - collapsing the knee inward removes the space for a front kick to make contact with the intended target area
  - this is a quick, instinctive move; it has the benefit of the small bones of the attacker's kicking foot striking the bigger bone of the patella with the femur reinforcing

# Wedge Block

- A block to protect your face from any kind of punch
- How
- from your interview stance, with your hands still clasped raise your arms straight up
- elbows should be level with your eyes
- after blocking a punch you can move back into interview stance or use a sledgehammer defense (explained later)
- you do NOT chase the punch, your arms simply go straight up
- Why
  - your arms can take a much greater beating than your face
- this block is simple; with just one upward motion you can protect your face
- this block position allows you to follow with a sledgehammer defense

### Sledgehammer Defense

- · A powerful defense to injure and delay an attacker
- How
  - from wedge block, keeping hands clasped bring down your hands forcefully onto a target area
- target areas include (but not limited to): nose, throat, temple, collarbone, etc.
- Why
  - sledgehammer can cause an extreme amount of pain allowing you enough time to get away from the attacker
  - you are already in position to use the sledgehammer after completing a wedge block
  - sledgehammer can be used from any position: standing, kneeling, lying down, etc.

# **Open the Door: Standing**

- Simple pivot motion to defend against a shove or leg takedown
- How
- from interview stance, as attacker approaches you simply pivot on one leg (preferably the leg closest to the attacker) and allow the attacker's momentum to carry them past you
- Why
  - an attacker's goal is to either push you or grab you and take you down
  - pivoting removes the immediate target for pushing or grabbing and uses their force to your advantage
  - important: timing is important here; if you begin to pivot too soon, your attacker will simply track your movements and adjust

# **Open the Door: Kneeling**

- How
  - similar to the standing technique
  - <u>both knees down</u>: we will open the door by pivoting on our forward knee while going to a one knee up and one knee down stance perpendicular to our beginning stance – this creates the space to allow the attacker's momentum to carry them by you safely
  - one-knee-up and one-knee-down
    - in this stance we will create the pivot by reversing the knee positions
    - as the knee placement is switched, the pivot is created that opens the door
- Again, as in the standing open the door, timing is essential here to successfully complete the technique

# Kick Block/Takedown From Kneeling Position

- How
  - when an attacker throws a kick at you while you are in a kneeling position, make an X with your forearms to intercept the kick – keep thumbs in the up position to engage both bones in the forearm for reinforcement
  - after neutralizing the kick, place one hand on the attacker's heel, place the forearm of the other arm just above the knee of the kicking leg, and pull with the hand on the heel while pushing with the forearm – this locks the joint and forces the attacker to their back or incapacitates the joint in play

## **Foot Sweep From Back**

• How

- when you are on your back with a standing attacker approaching, roll to one side, the bottom foot will hook behind the attacker's lead leg low on the heel, the top foot will be applied directly above the attacker's knee on same leg
- a simultaneous push/pull will be initiated: pull the bottom foot that is hooked on the heel while the foot above the knee pushes – this motion locks the attacker's leg at the knee joint and the attacker can choose between falling on their back or severe damage to the knee
- once this is achieved, the objective is for the victim to return to their feet, create distance, and call for assistance

### Foot Sweep From Back

- Why
  - locking the attacker's leg low around the heel with the bottom foot and above the knee with the other leg gives you powerful leverage against a weak knee joint
  - the hook at the bottom also prevents the attacker from stepping out of the technique and catching their balance

## **Knee Scissor From Back**

#### • How

- almost identical to the previous technique
- in this instance, the attacker has stepped in too close to effectively employ the feet – to counteract this, we grab the heel of the lead leg with the hand on the side we rolled to
- the lower thigh is placed directly behind the heel to reinforce the hand and prevent the attacker from pulling the foot out
- instead of placing the foot directly above the knee, we apply our top knee to the same location just above the attacker's knee
- to execute the technique, we simply push with our upper knee and pull with the hand that is on the heel – the attacker's knee is locked as before and either falls or the knee joint gives way
- as the attacker falls, we return to our feet and create distance and call for assistance

#### **Returning to the Feet**

- How
  - once the attacker is downed, we maintain eye contact
  - the hand on the side we were lying on is used for support
  - the top foot is placed on ground for support while the bottom leg slides until we return either to a knee or standing
  - once again, eye contact is maintained with attacker throughout
- Why
  - eye contact is maintained to track the attacker's movements and be aware of any follow-up attacks as we regain our footing
  - one hand and foot are maintained for leverage points of contact to maintain balance
  - the bottom leg is slid away from the attacker to create distance and lessen the potential for the attacker to attempt to strike as you stand

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