

# Five Rules for Emergency Medicine Interns

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**B**uckle up, faculty, it's July! (Again.)

It's GAME TIME, interns. Pay attention. Here are five "Rules for Emergency Medicine Interns."

- 1 If the patient is *sick*, come get me.
- 2 It's your job to check "it."
- 3 If you don't know what to do, ask.
- 4 If someone is rude to you, tell me.
- 5 FEEDBACK IS LOVE!

## Rule 1: If the patient is sick, come get me.

Turn right around, come out of the room, don't even stop ask the patient's name. Come get me! When you find me, don't say, "Um, Dr. O'Brien, if you have a minute, could I talk to you about a patient?"

Don't stand there waiting patiently while I am speaking to someone. Interrupt me! Say, "Dr. O'Brien! I need you RIGHT NOW!"

If we go into the room together and the patient doesn't seem as sick to me as they did to you—that's ok. You will learn with time how to tell who is sick. *If you think the patient is sick, come get me.*

## Rule #2: It's your job to check "it."

"It" is anything and everything related to your patients. Why did the nursing home send them in? What did EMS say? What was the point-of-care glucose? Did you review the medication list? Have the nurses started that IV? Did the pain medicine help? What did the family say? What's the hemoglobin? Is the chest X-ray back yet? What's taking so long for the head CT?! Why is the ambulance transport delayed? Did that consult resident call you back?

It's your job to know "it" about your patients before I do. If I know the answers before you do, I win! You lose. They are your patients. It's your job to check "it."

## Rule #3: If you don't know what to do, ask.

There are no stupid questions. Ask!

## Rule #4: If someone is rude to you, tell me.

The emergency department is a healing environment. It is also a learning environment. We treat everyone with respect. We do not tolerate abusive behavior. If someone is rude to you, whether it is a colleague, a consultant, a patient, or a family member—you tell me.

I will take care of it. I have your back. You be polite too.

## Rule #5: Last rule: Feedback is love.

Doctor, how you get from July 1st this year to June 30th three years from now involves a lot of feedback. I get paid to criticize you, and you get paid to listen to it. If I didn't criticize you it would mean I didn't care about you. I care about you! I have faith in your ability to do better. Prepare to be criticized.

**Feedback is love!** ●

