Near Drowning Episode

Near drowning accidents usually do not cause any serious injury. Serious injury can occur if there has been a prolonged submersion or water gets into the lungs. Symptoms of breathing problems from water submersion may be delayed by several hours. Careful observation and follow up is important. Further exams and X-rays may be needed to check your condition.

Successful treatment for any drowning victim depends on a swift response and a quick diagnosis by trained medical personnel. This is an emergency. It has to be treated in an emergency department (ED). The main treatment consists of supplying oxygen to the lungs, heart and brain. IV fluids may be given if it appears that you are dehydrated.

For those with only minor problems, you may be sent home from the ED after 6 to 8 hours of observation. At this point, your evaluation does not show any evidence of serious medical problems. After discharge, avoid smoke, even secondhand smoke, as this is irritating to the lungs.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You or your child develops increased breathing difficulty, wheezing or a persistent cough.
- You or your child develops chest pain or coughs up blood.
- You or your child has an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.
- Your baby is older than 3 months with a rectal temperature of 102º F (38.9º C) or higher.
- **Your baby is 3 months old or younger with a rectal temperature of 100.4º F (38º C) or higher.**

Document Released: 01/25/2006 Document Re-Released: 03/14/2011
ExitCare® Patient Information ©2011 ExitCare, LLC.