

**Liza Lindeman**

**When the brain goes BOOM: Monitoring the head trauma patient | *Liza Lindeman***

In this lecture we will talk about how the normal brain works vs the traumatic brain. We will talk about the brain compensation mechanisms and what will happen with that “when the brain goes boom”.

We make a distinction between the primary and secondary brain injury.

Discuss triaging these patients, which are often polytrauma patients, with your ABCDE. Talk about the first emergency stabilization steps (Oxygen, IV fluids, why we prefer hypertonic saline instead of Mannitol, pain relief, blood pressure, minimal database etc.)

We talk about how hypoxia and hypotension are the biggest culprits when caring for head trauma patients. And we need to actively monitor for it to prevent it and treat it as quickly as possible.

We go over all the patient monitoring concerns: Vitals including heart/lung auscultation and blood pressure, ECG, MGCS, do’s and don’ts in preventing increasing ICP (positioning of the patient, no jugular sticks/nasal prongs, prevent coughing/vomiting etc.)

And discuss especially how our nursing skills are extremely important and how this can make the difference in outcome.

With every step we will focus on the why and how and how this will affect our patients. So, what do I, as a nurse/technician, need to monitor for with these patients. What does it look like, and what should we do to prevent further secondary brain injury.