TENSION PNEUMOTHORAX

History
Patient sustained chest trauma

Signs/Symptoms
Visible or palpable chest trauma
Severe respiratory distress
Decreased or absent breath sounds on one side
Hypotension
Patient is pulseless
Restlessness/agitation
Increased resistance to ventilation
Jugular vein distention
Tracheal deviation away from affected side

Working Assessment
Tension pneumothorax

Routine medical care for all patients

Patient sustained visible or palpable chest trauma?

- No
  - Treat appropriately, contacting medical control as necessary

- Yes
  - Patient is pulseless or systolic BP is less than 90?
    - No
      - Manage other treatable causes
    - Yes
      - Perform needle thoracostomy on affected side to decompress chest

Expedite transport to Level I or Level II Trauma Center

1st Responder
- BLS
- ILS
- ALS