



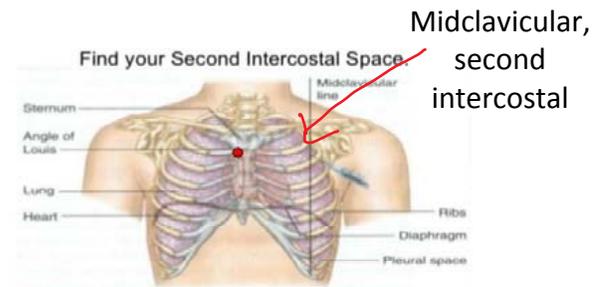
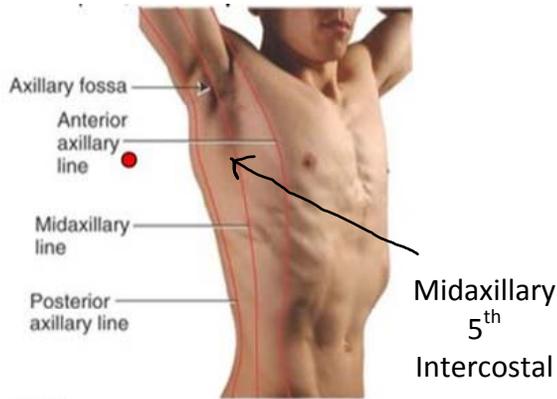
Needle Thoracostomy

Paramedic

PROCEDURE

- Locate the 5th intercostal space, midaxillary line on the affected side
- Clean the site with alcohol
- Insert the needle and catheter at a 90 degree angle directly over the top of the 5th rib.
- Listen for the escape of air to confirm (may not be audible), you should feel a pop and lack of resistance to indicate entry into the thoracic cavity
- Remove the needle, but leave the catheter in place
- Repeat as necessary next to the initial needle
- or -
- 2nd intercostal space, midclavicular line may be used as an alternate location

REFERENCE GRAPHICS



KEY POINTS

- Signs/symptoms of a tension pneumothorax: **restless/agitated**; increased resistance to ventilation; jugular vein distention, severe respiratory distress; decreased or absent breath sounds on the affected side; hypotension; cyanosis, tracheal deviation away from the affected side; subcutaneous emphysema
- Indications that the procedure was successful: increase in blood pressure; loss of jugular vein distention; decreased dyspnea; easier to ventilate patient; improved color; improved mental status
- Do not add a 3 way stopcock to catheter, leave it open to the atmosphere
- Repeat procedure as necessary