Seizure

Introduction

The likelihood of a seizure occurring during a long-duration mission is low. A history of seizure disorder is medically disqualifying, therefore a seizure occurring during a mission would be a de novo event.[1] During a long-duration mission, this condition could develop secondary to a medical illness, head trauma, toxin exposure, hypoxia, and others. Treatment would focus on identifying the cause, and preventing recurrences with available medication.[2]

Clinical Priority and Clinical Priority Rationale by Design Reference Mission

One of the inherent properties of space flight is a limitation in available mass, power, and volume within the spacecraft. These limitations mandate prioritization of what medical equipment and consumables are manifested for the flight, and which medical conditions would be addressed. Therefore, clinical priorities have been assigned to describe which medical conditions will be allocated resources for diagnosis and treatment. “Shall” conditions are those for which diagnostic and treatment capability must be provided, due to a high likelihood of their occurrence and severe consequence if the condition were to occur and no treatment was available. “Should” conditions are those for which diagnostic and treatment capability should be provided if mass/power/volume limitations allow. Conditions were designated as “Not Addressed” if no specific diagnostic and/or treatment capability are expected to be manifested, either due to a very low likelihood of occurrence or other limitations (for example, in medical training, hardware, or consumables) that would preclude treatment. Design Reference Missions (DRMs) are proposed future missions designated by a set of assumptions that encompass parameters such as destination, length of mission, number of crewmembers, number of Extravehicular Activities (EVAs), and anticipated level of care. The clinical priorities for all medical conditions on the Exploration Medical Condition List (EMCL) can be found here (https://humanresearchwiki.jsc.nasa.gov/index.php?title=Category:All_DRM). The EMCL document may be accessed here (https://humanresearchwiki.jsc.nasa.gov/images/6/62/EMCL_RevC_2013.pdf).
The likelihood of a seizure occurring during the relatively short duration of a lunar sortie mission is very low. The crew is medically screened prior to flight, and other potential causes of seizures (head trauma, toxic exposure, hypoxia) are unlikely, and would be treated under those conditions. This condition is therefore not specifically addressed by the medical kit.

The likelihood of a seizure occurring during a lunar outpost mission is low but, due to the long-duration of the mission, this condition could develop secondary to a medical illness, head trauma, toxin exposure, hypoxia, and others. Therefore, treatment shall be manifested.

The likelihood of a seizure occurring during a NEA mission is low but, due to the long-duration of the mission, this condition could develop secondary to a medical illness, head trauma, toxin exposure, hypoxia, and others. Therefore, treatment shall be manifested.

**Initial Treatment Steps During Space Flight**

A link is provided to a prior version of the International Space Station (ISS) Medical Checklist, which outlines the initial diagnostic and treatment steps recommended during space flight for various conditions which may be encountered onboard the ISS. Further diagnostic and treatment procedures beyond the initial steps outlined in the Medical Checklist are then recommended by the ground-based Flight Surgeon, depending on the clinical scenario. Please note that this version does not represent current diagnostic or treatment capabilities available on the ISS. While more recent versions of this document are not accessible to the general public, the provided version of the checklist can still provide a general sense of how medical conditions are handled in the space flight environment. Medical Checklists will be developed for exploration missions at a later point in time.
Capabilities Needed for Diagnosis

The following is a hypothetical list of capabilities that would be helpful in diagnosis. It does not necessarily represent the current capabilities available onboard current spacecraft or on the ISS, and may include capabilities that are not yet feasible in the space flight environment.

- Crew medical restraint system
- Vital signs measurement capability (blood pressure, pulse, respiratory rate, temperature, pulse oximetry, as required per the patient's clinical state)
- Blood analysis [Complete Blood Count (CBC), electrolytes]
- Ophthalmoscope
- Auscultation device (such as a stethoscope)
- Imaging [such as computed tomography (CT), Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)]
- Cardiac [Electrocardiograph (ECG)] monitor

Capabilities Needed for Treatment

The following is a hypothetical list of capabilities that would be helpful in treatment. It does not necessarily represent the current capabilities available onboard current spacecraft or on the ISS, and may include capabilities that are not yet feasible in the space flight environment.

- Oral airway
- Ambu bag and mask
- Supplemental oxygen
- Intubation kit
- Intravenous (IV) or Intraosseous (IO) start and administration kit (rapid access may be needed)
- Medication delivery system (such as a Carpuject)
- Skin cleanser (such as alcohol/Benzalkonium antiseptic (BZK)/iodine)
- Bandaging
- Tape
- Gloves (non-sterile)
- Sharps container
- Diazepam [IV, Intramuscular (IM)]
- Phenytoin (Dilantin, oral and IV)
- Intravascular volume replacement (such as IV fluids)
**Associated Gap Reports**

The NASA Human Research Program (HRP) identifies gaps in knowledge about the health risks associated with human space travel and the ability to mitigate such risks. The overall objective is to identify gaps critical to human space missions and close them through research and development. The gap reports that are applicable to this medical condition are listed below. A link to all of the HRP gaps can be found here (http://humanresearchroadmap.nasa.gov/Gaps/).

2.01 - We do not know the quantified health and mission outcomes due to medical events during exploration missions.

2.02 - We do not know how the inclusion of a physician crew medical officer quantitatively impacts clinical outcomes during exploration missions.

3.01 - We do not know the optimal training methods for in-flight medical conditions identified on the Exploration Medical Condition List taking into account the crew medical officer’s clinical background. (Closed)

3.03 - We do not know which emerging technologies are suitable for in-flight screening, diagnosis, and treatment during exploration missions.

4.01 - We do not have the capability to provide a guided medical procedure system that integrates with the medical system during exploration missions.

4.02 - We do not have the capability to provide non-invasive medical imaging during exploration missions.

4.04 - We do not have the capability to deliver supplemental oxygen to crew members while minimizing local and cabin oxygen build-up during exploration missions.

4.05 - We do not have the capability to measure laboratory analytes in a minimally invasive manner during exploration missions.

4.14 - We do not have the capability to track medical inventory in a manner that integrates securely with the medical system during exploration missions.

4.15 - Lack of medication usage tracking system that includes automatic time stamping and crew identification

4.17 - We do not have the capability to package medications to preserve stability and shelf-life during exploration missions.

4.19 - We do not have the capability to monitor physiological parameters in a minimally invasive manner during exploration missions.

4.23 - We do not have the capability to auscultate, transmit, and record body sounds during exploration missions.

4.24 - Lack of knowledge regarding the treatment of conditions on the Space Medicine Exploration Medical Condition List in remote, resource poor environments (Closed)

5.01 - We do not have the capability to comprehensively manage medical data during exploration missions.

**Other Pertinent Documents**

**List of Acronyms**

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References


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