

# Lightning strikes and paramedic care

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Consequently, human muscles and nerves are vastly disrupted by lightning strikes (Ritenour, Morton, and McManus). In addition, lightning strikes tend to induce electrical surges within the human body particularly in the nervous system leading to cardiac arrest. Moreover, human hearing is directly affected by the thundershock wave produced by lightning strikes (Ritenour, Morton, and McManus).

#### Heart and Cardiac Rhythm Effects

Lightning strikes produce diverse cardiac effects ranging from changes in the electrocardiograph (ECG) patterns to cardiac seizures. The victim of a lightning strike may be suffering from cardiac contusion, myocardial infarction, stroke, arrhythmia among other problems (McIntyre, Simpson, and Redfearn). Lightning strikes tend to depolarise the myocardium leading to thoracic muscle spasm and respiratory failure as well as asystole (American Heart Association).

#### Patient Treatment by Paramedics

In case of a lightning strike, the paramedic should take to resuscitation as soon as possible since most lightning strikes patients develop respiratory problems. If back injuries are present, it is best to stabilize the victim's head before proceeding to artificial resuscitation. In addition, it is possible that the victim will have altered levels of consciousness that may lead to ventilator impairment. Often the fundamental cause of ventilator impairment is a blocked pharynx due to a relaxed tongue. The paramedic must check for such blockages immediately after which resuscitation should be continued (Medscape). The first aid team on the scene must initiate cardiopulmonary resuscitation at the earliest since most lightning strike victims die as a result of cardiopulmonary failures.

<https://assignbuster.com/lightning-strikes-and-paramedic-care/>

### Self Protection

When providing help to a lightning strike victim, the rescuer must make sure that they are positioned in a safe place where lightning strikes are not going to affect the rescue attempt. It is typical for lightning to strike again within the same zone. Moreover, lightning strike dangers continue roughly up to half an hour after the last lightning strike is seen or thunder is heard (Medscape).

### Conclusion

Lightning strikes present a sizable mortality rate in victims largely due to cardiopulmonary failure. The best line of action to rescue a victim of lightning strikes is to provide artificial resuscitation as soon as possible. It is only possible to save lightning strike victims if they do not die out of respiratory or cardiac failures first. Moreover, the paramedic in the field should be careful of lightning strikes that may continue. A safe position must be taken before the victim is administered any care.