

## Quotes about Emergency Department Violence from Emergency Physicians

Reporters: If you would like to speak with one of the following emergency physicians, contact Mike Baldyga at [mbaldyga@acep.org](mailto:mbaldyga@acep.org).

**Emergency Physician – Illinois** - “I was assaulted by a patient in the hallway when I was 26 weeks pregnant. I was choked and tackled to the ground. I pressed charges, and the patient pled guilty to battery.”

**Emergency Physician – Ohio** “When I first started working, a patient had been shot arrived at one of our emergency departments. He was quickly transferred to a trauma center where a loaded hand gun was found on him.”

**Emergency Physician – Texas** “I feel there are weekly, if not sometimes almost daily, ‘near misses’ where all it would take is a quick poor reaction/decision by patient, and there could be severe injury to staff. There just aren’t enough safety measures, and there are many intense situations/emotions and desperate people.”

**Emergency Physician – Michigan** “I saw a patient standing, with the blood pressure machine cord wrapped around a nurse’s neck, using both hands to tighten it. She looked terrified. I ran toward him and tackled him. The nurse had neck abrasions but did not require treatment. We were all traumatized by this incident, and even more so by the very slow way this went through the courts.”

**Emergency Physician – Maine** “I was working night shifts and went to the local police department to inquire about having an officer sit in the emergency department. I was told by the hospital that it would be too expensive. I was assaulted by a patient and his cousin. Nurses had to intervene and get me out of the headlock that one assailant had me from behind.”

**Emergency Physician – Georgia** “I was threatened by a man who brought in two women late one weekend, both claiming to have the worst migraine of their lives and said only Dilaudid helped their headaches. Neither got Dilaudid. The man stood up and got in my face threateningly. I stepped out of the room and called security to have him removed from the department. Upon leaving he made specific threats to hunt me down and said he knew who I was, and when I got off work he was coming after me. The local nursing staff warned me he was a volatile and dangerous person and that I should not leave after my shift without security. I had to hire an attorney to prosecute the patient myself, get a restraining order, and made three court appearances.

**Emergency Physician - Illinois** “I was about to give medication to a psychiatric patient who was claiming she was going to the suburbs to kill her family. There were two security guards, a nurse and a tech also in the room. I turned to close the door when she pounced out of bed, grabbed my neck and strangled me, knocked me into the door and slammed my head into door knocking me out. I had bruises and strangle marks around my neck for awhile.”

**Emergency Physician – California** “A patient came into my emergency department complaining of abdominal pain and throwing up blood. He did not look to be in distress. He also did not have identification on him. He asked me when he was getting his pain medicine. I told him I had no records for him and he had no identification. I had to make sure he had something serious before I could give him pain medication. He then kicked me in the stomach, jumped off the gurney, called me a racist, and started walking toward me swinging his wrist. At this point, I knew his abdomen was obviously not bothering him.