Adult Discriminators for National Triage Scale Categories

	Category 1 (Immediate)	Category 2 (10 Minutes)	Category 3 (30 Minutes)	Category 4 (60 Minutes)	Category 5 (120 Minutes)
Airway	Obstructed/ Partially Obstructed	Patent	Patent	Patent	Patent
Breathing	Absent respiration Severe respiratory distress: • unable to speak • centrally cyanosed • severe use of accessory muscles Hypoventilation	Respiration present Moderate respiratory distress: • speaking in words • peripheral cyanosis • moderate use of accessory muscles	Respiration present Mild respiratory distress: • speaking in short sentences • skin pink • minimal use of accessory muscles	Respiration present No respiratory distress: • speaking in full sentences • nil accessory muscle use • normal breathing rate and rhythm	No respiratory distress
Circulation	Severe Haemodynamic compromise/ absent circulation Skin pale, moist, cool Uncontrolled haemorrhage	Moderate Haemodynamic compromise/ circulation present Skin pale, cool, moist Palpable brachial pulse Semi controlled haemorrhage	Mild Haemodynamic compromise/ circulation present Skin pink/pale , warm, dry Palpable radial pulse Controlled haemorrhage	Circulation present Heart rate normal Skin pink, warm, dry Nil history of haemorrhage	No cardiovascular insult
Disability	GCS < 9	GCS 9-12 Severe pain > 7/10 Severe neurovascular compromise • pulseless • cold • nil sensation • decreased capillary refill Penetrating eye injury: • chemical injury, • sudden loss of vision with or without injury • sudden onset severe eye pain	GCS > 12 Moderate pain > 3/10 – 7/10 Moderate neurovascular compromise • pulse present • cool • decreased sensation • normal / decreased capillary refill • Sudden abnormal vision with or without injury • Moderate eye pain (e.g. blunt eye injury, flash burns, foreign body)	Normal GCS Mild pain < 3/10 Nil neurovascular compromise • pulse present • normal sensation • normal capillary refill • Normal vision • Mild eye pain (e.g. blunt eye injury, flash burns, foreign body)	Normal GCS No pain < 3/10 Nil neurovascular Compromise • Normal vision • No eye pain

References: (1) Monash Institute of Health Services Research. (2001). *Consistency of triage in Victoria's emergency departments. Guidelines for triage education and practice*. Clayton, Victoria: Monash Institute of Health Services Research (p.53) and (2) Australian Government, Department of Health and Aging. (2007). *Emergency Triage Education Kit*. Canberra: Commonwealth Department of Health and Aging