

The Multi-Organ Effects of a Vicious Cycle

What Happens to the Body's Organs?

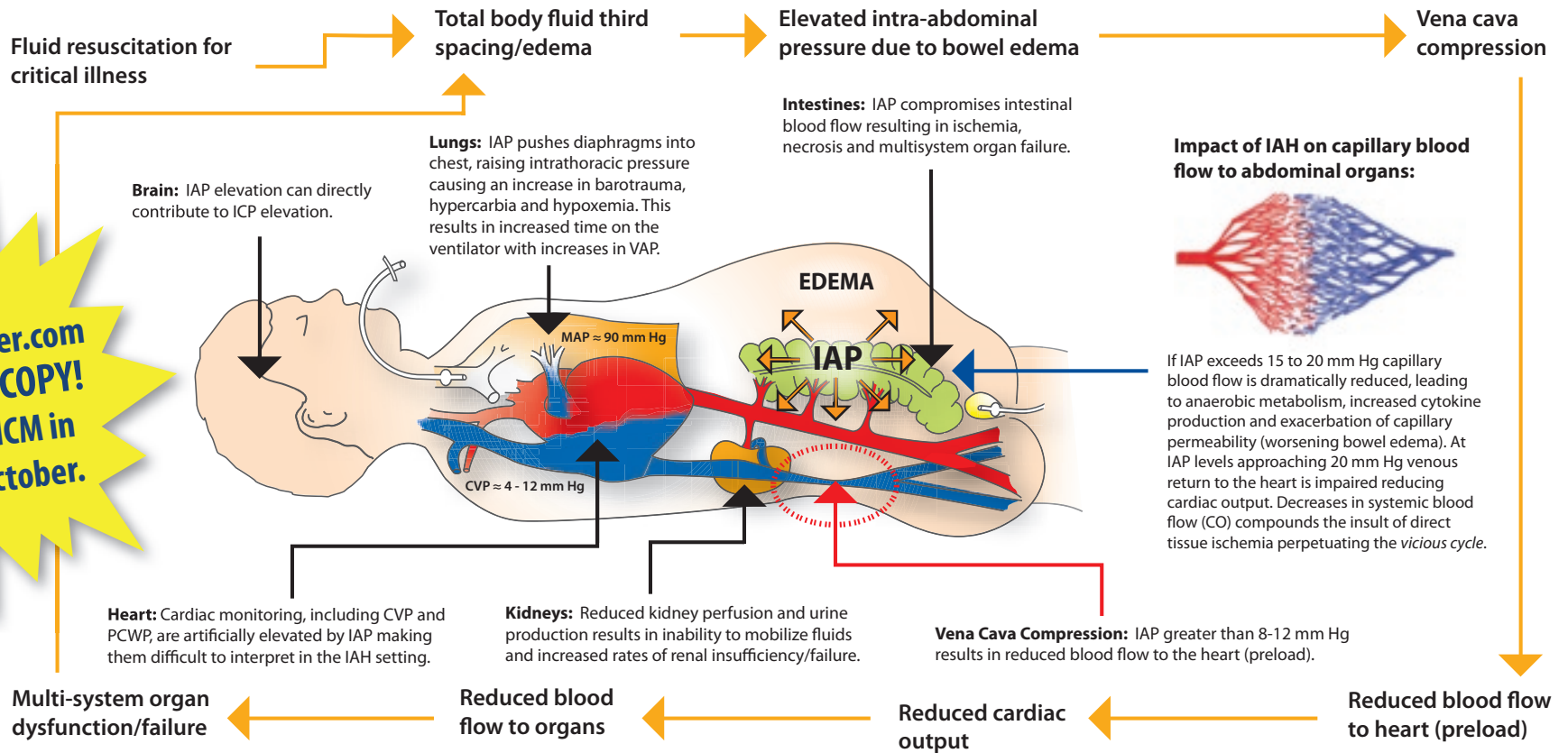
Intra-Abdominal Pressure and Intra-Abdominal Hypertension

Intra-Abdominal Pressure

Most critically ill patients have a significant systemic inflammatory response (SIRS) that triggers the release of cytokines leading to capillary permeability and interstitial edema. Abdominal viscera are particularly vulnerable as tissue edema worsens with the third spacing of resuscitative fluid. As visceral edema worsens intra-abdominal pressure (IAP) increases. As IAP increases perfusion to abdominal organs decreases resulting in compromise to visceral blood flow and tissue ischemia. Tissue ischemia then perpetuates further cytokine release and worsening systemic inflammation thus initiating the *vicious cycle*.

Intra-Abdominal Hypertension

Intra-Abdominal Hypertension (IAH) is defined as Intra-Abdominal Pressure (IAP) above 12 mm Hg [1]. At which point significant tissue perfusion problems arise, which can lead to early organ dysfunction. An IAP level over 20 mm Hg typically causes organ failure and is called Abdominal Compartment Syndrome [1].



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