

Caretaker Questions

Careful questioning of the caretakers around the victim is critical as soon as practical after presentation by the victim. Establishing a timeline of the child's location and behaviors/demeanor tracing backwards from the time of reporting of the injury is necessary to help establish both the onset of the injury and the potential suspect(s).

The presentation of these questions/issues to the caretaker(s) should be framed as necessary to help medical staff diagnose the injury and medically preserve the child. This often encourages a potential suspect to be cooperative with the investigation. As some questions are likely going to be seen as threatening to a caretaker who has caused the injury, the presentation of those questions should be made with care. However, once information leading the investigator to believe that a verified suspect is emerging; the use of Miranda should be considered.

Birth Process:

Where/When was child born?
Name of birth doctor?
Vaginal/C-Section?
On-time delivery/Premature?
Complications during pregnancy?
Medical issues at birth?

Timelines:

Feeding:

Breast-fed or bottle (type of formula)?
When last ate/drank?
 What – How Much – When
Was feeding "normal"?

Vomiting/Spit-Up:

When (as precise as possible)?
What came up/out (color, texture)?

Sleeping/Napping/Drowsy:

Normal sleep schedule?
How much recent sleeping?
 When did it start?
Hard to wake?
Unable to sleep?

Developmental Stage:

Rolling over/Sitting up?
Crawling?
Able to pull self up?
Walking unassisted?

Twitching/Jittery:

When did it start (as precise as possible)?
Describe what it looked like.
Activity being done when it started?
Reaction to it by caretaker.

Breathing:

Changes in breathing?
Gasping/Trouble breathing?
Activity being done when it started?
Other sounds made (moaning/panting/etc.)

Diaper Change:

Last time needed?
Type of bowel movement (solid, runny, color, etc.)?
Number of changes/accidents recently?

Interaction with surroundings:

Eye movement (able to follow sounds)?
Type of interaction/Playfulness
Last time more playful?
When did the change come (precise)?

Crying:

What is normal for the child?
Recent increase/decrease?
Complete stop to crying/making noise?
When (precise)?
Type/Pitch/Tone change?

Falls/Trauma:

- Any history of falls?
 - When?
 - Describe in detail
 - Body position pre/post fall
 - Everyone who witnessed fall
 - Tell anyone about the fall?
 - Any medical treatment sought?
- Any other trauma/accidents?
 - Describe in detail

Medical:

- Pediatrician?
 - Last visit?
- Recent colds/illnesses?
- Immunizations (what type/when)?
- Medications prescribed since birth?
 - Taken per doctor orders?
- Any other diagnosed/suspected medical concerns?

Caregivers:

- Daily timeline of who cares for child.
- Complete list of regular caretakers
 - Date/Time of their last care of child
- Other caretakers who were with child in last 5 days?
- Other children who have been around this child?
 - Ages?
 - Time frames/supervision by whom?
- Who was with child immediately before injury/illness?
 - List everyone around at that time (whether providing care or not).

Stressors in Place:

Work/Employment history?

Recent changes?

Financial problems?

Sleeping Patterns?

Recent changes?

Lack of sleeping?

Relationship issues?

Domestic violence?

Recent arguing?

Isolation from family/friends?

Difficulty dealing with:

Spouse/Family?

Uncontrollable Crying?

Bathroom/Soiling?

Are your expectations of your child's behavior being met?

How does your child feel about you?

How has your life changed as a result of the baby?