

## Unstable Patient with Penetrating Trauma

Penetrating injuries occur when an object pierces the skin and causes tissue damage. These injuries are usually related to stab or gunshot wounds.

CT is contraindicated in hemodynamically unstable patients with penetrating trauma.

Prior to surgical exploration conduct:

- Chest Radiograph: Assess for pneumothorax
- E-FAST ultrasound: Assess for hemoperitoneum/hemopericardium/ pneumothorax (see **Appendix F** for E-FAST standards)
- Additional radiographs to identify penetrating objects and their trajectories (head, neck, etc.)