



Yolo County Emergency Medical Services Agency Protocols

Revised Date: May 1, 2024

AGITATED AND/OR COMBATIVE PATIENTS

Adult

Pediatric

Indication

1. The safety of the patient, community, and responding personnel is of paramount concern when following this policy.
2. Many situations that result in agitated patients can be resolved by simple conversation and de-escalation techniques.
3. Prehospital personnel must consider that combative or violent behavior may be a symptom of medical conditions such as head trauma, hypoxia, alcohol, drug related problems, hypoglycemia and other metabolic disorders, dementia, stress, and psychiatric disorders.
4. Restraint mechanisms are to be used only when necessary in situations where the patient is potentially violent or is exhibiting behavior that is dangerous to self or others.
5. Only the minimum amount of restraint necessary to protect providers and the patient should be used.
6. This policy is not intended to negate the need for law enforcement personnel to use appropriate restraint equipment that is approved by their respective agency to establish scene management.

BLS

Assess vital signs
O₂, titrate SpO₂ to \geq 94%

Agitated Patients

De-Escalation Techniques:

- Remain Calm
- Position yourself at the patient's level
- Listen
- Acknowledge their feelings
- Avoid giving orders
- Offer options
- Ask what they need
- Do not threaten
- Use only the required responders, ask others to step out

Physical Restraint:

- Use only padded soft restraints that will allow for quick release.
- Restrained extremities should be evaluated for pulse quality, capillary refill, color, temperature, nerve and motor function immediately following application and every 10 minutes thereafter.
- Restraints shall be applied in such a manner that they do not cause vascular, neurological or respiratory compromise.



Interfacility Transport (IFT) of Psychiatric Patients

- Transport personnel must be provided with the written restraint order from the transferring Physician or their designee as part of the transfer record.
- Padded soft restraints are the preferred method of restraint for IFT Psychiatric Patients.
- A two-point, locking, padded cuff and belt restraint and/or two-point locking, padded ankle restraints may be used only in the IFT of psychiatric patients on a 5150 hold. Transport personnel must have immediate access to the restraint key at all times.
- Restrained extremities should be evaluated for pulse quality, capillary refill, color, temperature, nerve and motor function immediately following application and every 10 minutes thereafter.

ALS

Consider: Blood Glucose, Temperature, Cardiac Monitor, Waveform EtCO₂

Patients in Law Enforcement Custody

- Restraint devices applied by law enforcement must provide sufficient slack in the restraint device to allow the patient to straighten the abdomen and chest and to take full tidal volume breaths.
- Restraint devices applied by law enforcement require the officer's continued presence to ensure patient and scene management safety. The officer should accompany the patient in the ambulance.
- In the unusual event that this is not possible, the officer should follow by driving in tandem with the ambulance on a pre-determined route. A method to alert the officer of any problems that may develop during transport should be discussed prior to leaving the scene. Patients in custody/arrest remain the responsibility of law enforcement.

Chemical Restraint

Early chemical restraint should be considered for patients with signs of Excited Delirium

Midazolam 2 mg SIVP

- Titrate to desired degree of sedation
- May repeat at 1 – 2 mg increments every 3 minutes
- Total max dose 6 mg

Or

Midazolam 5 mg IM

- No repeat

Or

Midazolam 10 mg IN

- ½ dose each nare
- No repeat

Midazolam 0.1 mg/kg SIVP

- Titrate to desired degree of sedation
- May repeat x 2 every 5 -10 minutes
- Max single dose 2 mg
- Total max dose 4 mg

**Use a 1 mL syringe for Midazolam administration in pediatric patients*

Or

Midazolam 0.1 mg/kg IM

- Max dose 4 mg
- No repeat

Or

Midazolam 0.2 mg/kg IN

- ½ dose each nare
- Max dose 5 mg
- No repeat



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Consider

- Consider any potential cause of the abnormal or combative behavior such as, but not limited to, head trauma, hypoxia, drug and alcohol related problems, hypoglycemia and other metabolic disorders, stress, excited delirium, or psychiatric disorders and treat according to the appropriate protocol.
- It is recognized that a full assessment requires patient cooperation, and thus may be difficult or impossible to perform.

Direction

- The receiving hospital shall be informed as soon as possible with the time and type of restraint.
- Patients shall not be transported in a prone position.
- Prehospital personnel must ensure that the patient's position does not compromise their respiratory/circulatory systems, and does not preclude any necessary medical interventions to protect or manage the airway should vomiting occur.
- The following forms of restraint shall NOT be applied by prehospital care personnel:
 - Hard plastic ties
 - Any restraint device requiring a key to remove. (EXCEPTION: IFT of Psychiatric Patients)
 - Restraining hands and feet behind the patient.
 - "Sandwich" restraints, using backboard, scoop-stretcher or flats.
 - Restraints shall not be attached to movable side rails of a gurney.
- Contact Base Hospital for additional treatment.