

Office of the Medical Director

Excellence, Compassion, Partnership, Integrity

CoVID-19 Update – 12.4.2020

Visit <http://www.regionsems.com/covid-19> for additional resources

Current State

- We are not in crisis mode and should be responding to all calls and treating/transporting appropriately.
- You may be asked to discontinue certain aerosol-generating procedures when you enter the ED until the patient is in a room (CPAP, nebulizers, etc.).
- ECMO – suspended indefinitely as of Monday, December 7, due to shortage of ICU beds. Will re-evaluate in early 2021.
- Vaccines are coming in the very near future. Individual doses will be allocated by the government to each state, and then within each state to the highest-risk groups based on CDC and Department of Health guidelines. The vaccines have been shown to be extremely effective in preventing Covid-19 (>90%).

Protect Yourself

- PPE works! Use it!
- Limit the number of providers involved in patient care.
- Whenever possible ask the patient to meet you at the front door to avoid entering the house/facility.
- No nebulizers in the ambulance!!! If absolutely needed, administer treatments outside of the ambulance.
- *In-line viral respiratory filters should be used with all nebulizers and airway devices.*
- Maintain 6 feet of separation from the patient except for hands-on exams or procedures.
- First responders should perform an initial size-up through a window or from the door if possible and stage for EMS if the patient's mental status and respiratory effort are adequate.

Protect Others

- Although N-95 masks with a valve provide the wearer with protection, they do NOT offer protection to those around you and should NOT be considered adequate to prevent community spread.
- No riders in the ambulance unless the patient absolutely requires a guardian or support person.
- *Cardiac arrests in general should not be transported unless you believe the hospital can do something that you can't in the field.*
- Practice social distancing as much as possible. Avoid gathering in ambulance vestibules and be mindful of where you are doffing and disposing of your PPE to limit exposure to other crews and patients.
- *We recommend everyone wear a mask at all times while at work except for eating or in a private space such as a bedroom or office. This includes every single patient encounter.*

Conserve Resources

- Masks may be re-used throughout a shift unless damaged or visibly soiled.
- *All patients and crew members should be wearing a mask when entering a hospital or ED.*
- Encourage non-transport or alternative transport options if the patient is stable, in no distress, has no confounding medical issues, and is only seeking evaluation for CoVID-19 related symptoms.
- Contact medical control (MRCC) if needed to assist with transport decisions.
- In order to minimize reports *there is no need to call in an MRCC report for routine low-risk non-transports.*
- MRCC reports should be kept brief utilizing the Green/Yellow/Red triage system.
- Radio is the preferred communication method for MRCC, followed by phone.

Exposures and Testing

- Exposures should be risk-stratified and managed according to the algorithm posted on our [website](#).
- The CDC plans to shorten the quarantine period from 14 days to 10 days, or even to 7 days with a negative test on day 7.
- Antibody tests are unproven and should not be used for decisions about immunity or quarantine. Important information on these tests is available on our [website](#).
- As testing result times are shortening, it is important for PCRs to be completed and uploaded promptly. In some cases a positive test result is reported before the PCR is available, which delays notification of pre-hospital professionals.

Daily Trivia

Previous Question: *In the last 100 years which disease outbreak has killed the most people worldwide?*
-The HIV/AIDS outbreak

New Question: Which virus inspired the movie "Contagion"?

Please take time to review the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section on our website. These are updated regularly and contain important information.