

**DEAD ON SCENE  
POLICY**

**Number: IV.B.**

**Date: 7/22/98**

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**Purpose:** To define the process to be followed when EMS personnel are faced with patients for whom resuscitation may not be indicated

**NOTE:** ON ALL PATIENTS DETERMINED TO BE DEAD ON SCENE, CONTACT WITH MEDICAL CONTROL MUST BE ESTABLISHED PRIOR TO CLEARING THE SCENE.

**M B S P I. CPR IS TO BE INITIATED ON ALL PATIENTS WITHOUT VITAL SIGNS (no blood pressure, pulse, respirations or pupillary reflex) UNLESS one or more of the following conditions exists:**

- A. Patient has a valid "Do Not Resuscitate" identification bracelet or "Do Not Resuscitate" order; or
- B. Decapitation; or
- C. 100% full thickness, total body burn, complete charring of the body including face; or
- D. Obvious mortal wounds/conditions, (injuries inconsistent with life - i.e.: crushing injuries of the head and/or chest); or
- E. Putrefied, decayed, or frozen bodies and/or lividity with rigor mortis.

**P II. ONCE CPR HAS BEEN INITIATED, should special circumstances arise which do not fall into the categories listed in Paragraph I above, and the prehospital providers feel that resuscitative efforts may not be indicated, ASYSTOLE SHOULD BE IMMEDIATELY CONFIRMED BY EKG (in 2 leads). MEDICAL CONTROL IS THEN TO BE IMMEDIATELY CONTACTED, at which time the decision to continue or cease CPR will be made.**

- A. Patients who are struck by lightning, are hypothermic (< 90°F), or cold water drownings (unless submersion time is greater than 2 hours)\* should receive full resuscitative efforts and such situations do not qualify for use of this policy.

**\*NOTE:** If submersion time is greater than 2 hours, contact Medical Control immediately.

**M B S P III. Procedure for the conditions listed in Paragraphs I & II above:**

- A. Contact Medical Control. Initiate the radio conversation with "This is a patient 'Dead on Scene' call, or patient with a 'Do Not Resuscitate' order." Medical Control is to document this call.
- B. When confirmed by Medical Control physician, record time, hospital and physician name.
- C. Notify police authority, if not already present, and request medical examiner for County where the death occurred. Removal of the body must be specifically authorized by the medical examiner or designee.
- D. Personal belongings, such as clothing, valuables, and identification, are not to be removed from the body by any other individual other than a police officer or representative from the Medical Examiner's office.

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- E. Document the information on the EMS Medical Record.
  - 1. Two (2) EKG strips, if obtained, should be attached to documentation - one copy to remain with agency records; one copy to accompany EMS record.
  - 2. Documentation should occur that includes include the unit number, clinical history, date and time of call and specific findings (e.g., signs of death or lividity).
- F. Clear the scene as appropriate.

3/25/98