

Purpose: To provide a process for the assessment and management of drowning or near drowning incidents

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I. Assessment Information

A. History:

1. Current History: mechanism of injury, submersion time, water temperature, type of water

- B. Specific Objective Findings:** vital signs, including breath sounds; signs of trauma

II. Management

- A. Establish and maintain the airway with spine stabilization, if risk of trauma. Provide oxygenation and support ventilations as needed.**

- B. If pulse is absent, CPR per AHA/ARC standards.**

1. If submersion time is greater than 2 hours, immediately contact Medical Control for possible referral to the Dead On Scene Policy.

2. Monitor EKG.

- a. If monitor or AED indicates defibrillation warranted, defibrillate up to three shocks.

3. Obtain patient's temperature:

- a. 4 minutes rectally.

- b. Axillary site is permissible, but rectal is preferred and is required in transport longer than 15 minutes.

4. Prevent further heat loss by transport in a warm environment (> than 90° F). Patient should be dry. No other active re-warming unless directed Medical Control.

5. **If patient temperature is > 86° F, go to appropriate Cardiac Arrest Protocol.**

6. **If patient temperature is < 86° F, refer to Hypothermia/Frostbite Protocol.**

CONTACT MEDICAL CONTROL

7. **Possible orders post-radio contact:**

- a. Medications or further defibrillation as ordered by Medical Control.

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- b. Immediate transport per area Destination Policy.

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- C. **If pulse is present:**
 - 1. Monitor EKG.
 - 2. Obtain patient's temperature:
 - a. 4 minutes rectally.
 - b. Axillary site is permissible, but rectal is preferred and is required in transfers longer than 15 minutes.
 - 3. If patient is hypothermic, go to Hypothermia/Frostbite Protocol.
 - 4. Prevent further heat loss by transport in a warm environment (>90° degrees F). Patient should be dry. No other active re-warming unless directed by Medical Control.
 - 5. Continued support of oxygenation and ventilation.
 - 6. Consider vascular access.
 - 7. **Possible orders post radio contact:**
 - a. Medications as ordered
 - b. Immediate transport

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III. **Special Considerations**

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- A. Patient suspected of hypothermia should receive gentle handling, as movement may precipitate VF.