

# MEMO

To: Field Personnel



From: Doug Swanson, MD, FACEP, FAEMS  
Medical Director, Mecklenburg EMS Agency

Date: 08/26/2021

Re: Protocol Update

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**There is an update to The Mecklenburg EMS Agency ALS Patient Care Protocols with an implementation date of September 1, 2021**

**Few changes to review:**

**Definition of pediatric age expanded for clarity**

- Pediatric = age  $\leq$  14-years of age (trauma)  
age  $<$  18-years of age (non-trauma)

**Cardiac arrest and specific relation to administering naloxone**

- For **HIGH** suspicion of opioid associated cardiac arrest: administer naloxone 2 mg IV
  - Naloxone (Narcan®) has not been associated with improved outcome once cardiac arrest has occurred and therefore is not indicated in all cardiac arrest events
  - Attention must be on airway, oxygenation, ventilation, and cardiac arrest care

Thereby administer if felt the arrest is due to opioid overdose, but not for all cardiac arrest

- Examples: 32-yo known opioid user in cardiac arrest – indicated  
78-yo with chest pain in cardiac arrest – not indicated without a high suspicion of opioid overdose



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Mecklenburg EMS Agency

4425 Wilkinson Blvd.

Charlotte, NC 28208

p. 704.943.6000

f. 704.943.6001

medic911.com

## Heat exposure

- If available, an ice water immersion tank should be utilized for patients with heat exhaustion or heat stroke to cool to < 102° F prior to transport
  - Must maintain protection of patient from head dropping beneath water surface

Such tanks are becoming more commonplace, especially at athletic practices with athletic trainers on site. If initiated, appropriate to continue until temperature < 102°.

- Rapid cooling is the most appropriate therapy for heat stroke
- If not available, care as usual

## Psychiatric

- Utilization of ketamine for the combative patient requiring physical restraints for patient and/or crew safety
- Extensive in-service provided – must be reviewed

### Caveats

- Administering ketamine – as for patients requiring physical restraints – would exclude any freestanding emergency department as a destination
- 100% of administrations will be reviewed for indications and adverse events

Thank you!