Monterey County EMS System Policy

Protocol Number: M-5
Effective Date: 7/28/23
Review Date: 6/30/25

AGITATED/COMBATIVE PATIENT

ALS and BLS CARE

Patient is agitated and a danger to self or others
- Attempt to determine the presence of cognitive impairments or developmental disabilities
- Attempt to reasonably address patient concerns
- Assemble personnel (including law enforcement if needed)

Routine Medical Care (Protocol M-3)

Assume the patient has a medical cause of agitation and treat reversible causes

Does the patient's behavior or level of agitation pose a clear danger to self or others?

Yes →

Midazolam
5 mg IM/IN
OR
If an IV/IO is already in place, administer Midazolam 2-4 mg IV/IO

Do not attempt to place an IV in a severely agitated patient

Use of Restraint Policy (# 4508)

Prevent positional asphyxiation by avoiding prone positioning, hog-tie applications, or other positions that limit diaphragmatic excursion

No ↓

Utilize verbal de-escalation techniques

If the patient does not respond to de-escalation attempts, see:
Use of Restraint Policy (# 4508)

As soon as may be safely accomplished:
- Oxygen administration to maintain SpO_2 ≥ 94%
- EKG monitoring / 12 Lead EKG
- $EtCO_2$ monitoring
- Establish IV/IO access
- Consider administering IV/IO fluids
  - 20 mL/kg bolus Normal Saline up to 1L – May repeat as necessary
- Treat **Hyperthermia (Protocol E-3)**
- Be prepared to provide airway/ ventilation support

RASS must be assessed/documented prior to and post pharmacological intervention.

The goal of sedation is a 0 or -1 on the RASS.

Still significantly agitated?

Sedate/Repeat Sedation
Midazolam 2-4 mg IV/IO
OR
5mg IM/IN
Base Hospital Contact required for additional doses

Transport to the most appropriate Emergency Department

Richmond Agitation and Sedation Scale (RASS)

+4	Combative	Violent, immediate danger to staff
+3	Very Agitated	Pulls or removes tube(s) or catheter(s); Aggressive
+2	Agitated	Frequent non-purposeful movement
+1	Restless	Anxious, apprehensive, but movements not aggressive or vigorous
0	Alert and Calm	
-1	Drowsy	Not fully alert, but has sustained awakening to *voice* (eye opening & contact ≥ 10 sec)
-2	Light Sedation	Briefly awakens to *voice* (eye opening & contact < 10 sec)
-3	Moderate Sedation	Movement or eye-opening to *voice* (but no eye contact)
-4	Deep Sedation	No response to voice, but movement or eye opening to *physical* stimulation
-5	Unarousable	No response to *voice or physical* stimulation