

Refusing Medical Aid (RMA)

Note:

Request Advanced Life Support if the patient's condition warrants the need.

Do not delay transport to the appropriate hospital.

Note:

All competent adults have the right to refuse medical treatment and/or transport. It is the responsibility of the prehospital care provider to be sure that the patient is fully informed about their situation and the possible implications of refusing treatment or transport.

- I. Follow the protocol for “**General Approach to Prehospital Patient Management**” and any other treatment protocol, which is required according to the patient's condition and your assessment of the patient.

- II. When the patient or legal guardian refuses treatment or requests that you discontinue further treatment of the patient, do not initiate any new treatment modalities.

- III. Discuss with the patient the need for treatment and/or transport. If the patient still refuses treatment or transport and you feel that the patient's condition requires treatment or transport, allow the patient's family members, friends, or anyone else who is familiar with the patient to try and convince the patient of the need for treatment or transport. Contact Medical Control per regional protocol.

- IV. If patient still refuses treatment or transport and the patient is 18 years of age or older, or is an emancipated minor, or is the parent of a child, or has married:
 - A. Assess level of consciousness using AVPU and GCS.
 - B. Attempt to obtain vital signs and repeat AVPU and GCS every 5 – 10 minutes.
 - C. Evaluate the patient for any apparent medical or physical conditions, which may limit the patient's ability to think rationally. For example:
 1. Psychiatric or behavioral disorders.
 2. Patient presents a danger to themselves or others.
 3. Current alcohol or drug use.
 4. History of disease effecting mental capacity (i.e. Alzheimer's).
 5. Evidence of abuse to the patient.
 6. Inability to ambulate.

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D. If patient is Alert with a GCS of 15 and no evidence of any apparent medical or physical conditions, which may limit the patient's ability to think rationally:

1. If patient still refuses treatment or transport offer to call Medical Control or the patient's own physician and have the patient speak with the physician.
2. If patient still refuses treatment or transport continue to step VI.

E. If patient is not Alert, has a GCS of less than 15, or there is evidence of an apparent medical or physical condition, which may limit the patient's ability to think rationally:

1. Obtain assistance from Law Enforcement and contact Medical Control for direction.

V. If the patient still refuses treatment or transport and is under the age of 18, or is not an emancipated minor, or is not the parent of a child, or is not married:

- A. These individuals cannot give effective legal/informed consent to treatment and therefore, conversely, cannot legally refuse treatment.
- B. In an emergency situation when a parent or guardian is not available to give consent, emergency treatment and transport should be rendered based on implied consent.
- C. In an emergency or non-emergency situation when a parent or guardian is present, the EMS provider must obtain consent from the parent or guardian prior to rendering treatment or transport.
- D. If a parent or guardian is refusing to give consent for treatment or transport, and the EMS provider feels that treatment or transport is necessary, the EMS provider should obtain assistance from a Law Enforcement agency. Medical Control should be contacted and the parent or guardian should be allowed to speak with the physician.
- E. If the parent or guardian is still refusing treatment or transport and Law Enforcement is not directing the removal of the patient to a hospital, proceed to VI.

VI. For any patient who refuses treatment or transport, the EMS provider must advise the patient, or if applicable the parent or guardian, of the possible consequences of their refusal.

VII. Complete a Prehospital Care Report (PCR) for the patient. At a minimum the following patient information must be documented or the EMS provider must document the reasons why this patient information cannot be documented.

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A. Documentation Information:

1. Age and sex.
2. Patient's name, address, and date of birth.
3. Chief complaint.
4. Subjective and objective patient assessment findings.
5. Pertinent history as needed to clarify the problem (mechanism of injury, previous illnesses, allergies, medications, etc.)
6. Level of consciousness.
7. One complete set of vital signs
8. Treatment given and the patient's response.
9. Parent or guardian's name if applicable.
10. Identification information of any Law Enforcement personnel and Medical Control directly involved with the refusal of treatment or transport.
11. ***Document that risks and consequences were explained and understood.***

B. Complete the refusal documentation on the back of the PCR and/or any other regional or agency approved refusal of treatment or transport form. Have the patient, or where applicable the parent or guardian sign the refusal form. If the patient or applicable responsible party refuses to sign the refusal form then have a family member, Law Enforcement official, or bystander sign as a witness and document the refusal to sign on the PCR.