

# FORSYTH COUNTY EMS MEDICAL PROTOCOLS

## Overdose/Toxic Ingestion

### History:

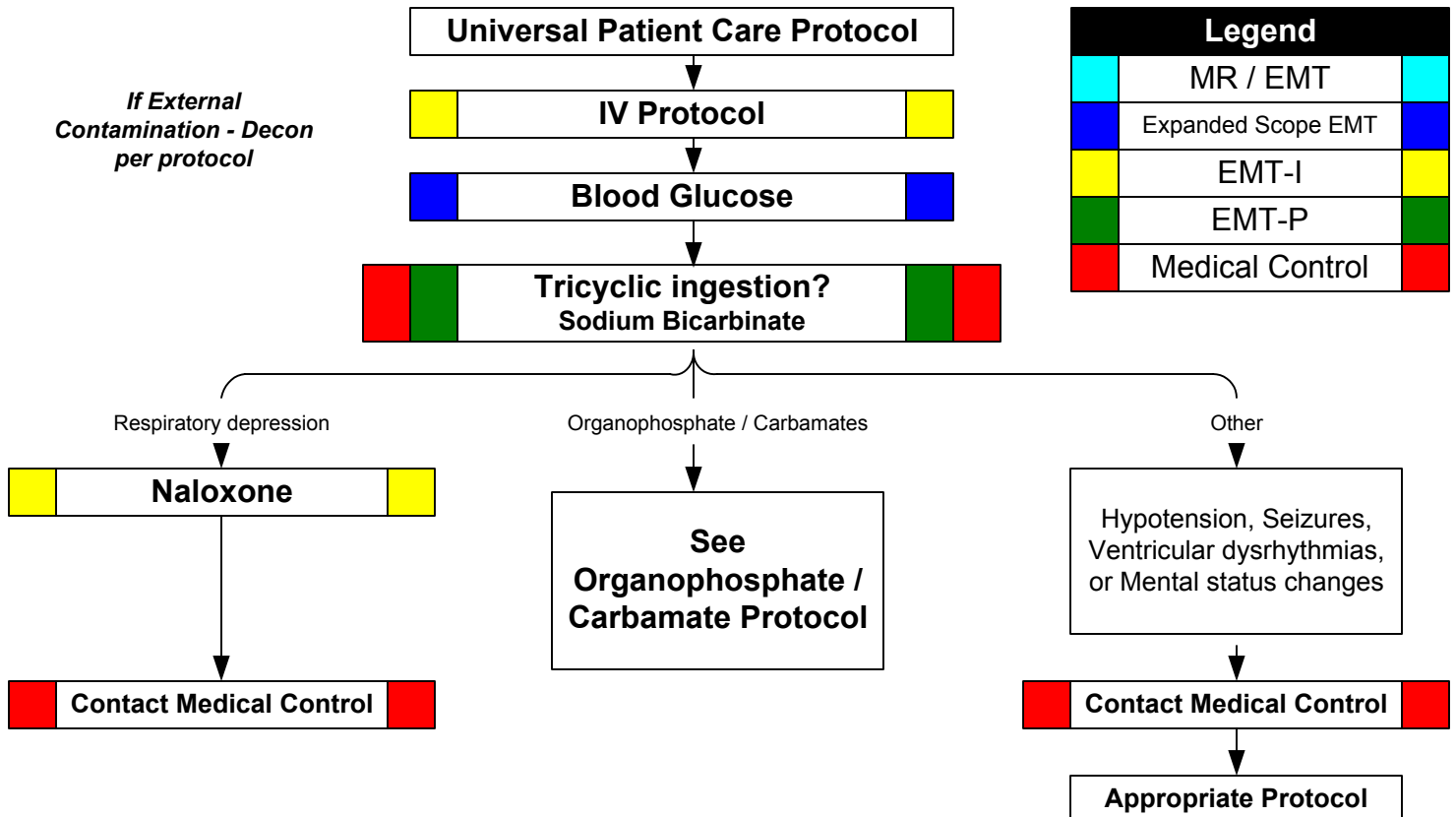
- \* Ingestion or suspected ingestion of a potentially toxic substance
- \* Substance ingested, route, quantity
- \* Time of ingestion
- \* Reason (suicidal, accidental, criminal)
- \* Available medications in home
- \* Past medical history, medications

### Signs and Symptoms:

- \* Mental status changes
- \* Hypotension / hypertension
- \* Decreased respiratory rate
- \* Tachycardia, dysrhythmias
- \* Seizures

### Differential:

- \* **Tricyclic antidepressants (TCAs)**
- \* **Acetaminophen (tylenol)**
- \* **Depressants**
- \* **Stimulants**
- \* **Anticholinergic**
- \* **Cardiac medications**
- \* **Solvents, Alcohols, Cleaning agents**
- \* **Insecticides (organophosphates)**



### Pearls:

- \* **Exam: Mental Status, Skin, HEENT, Heart, Lungs, Abdomen, Extremities, Neuro**
- \* Do not rely on patient history of ingestion, especially in suicide attempts.
- \* Bring bottles, contents, emesis to ED. **If industrial, request MSDS.**
- \* **Tricyclic:** 4 major areas of toxicity: seizures, dysrhythmias, hypotension, decreased mental status, or coma. Tricyclic OD with prolonged Q-T and tachycardia is the indication for Sodium Bicarb.
- \* **Acetaminophen:** initially normal or nausea/vomiting. If not detected and treated, causes irreversible liver failure.
- \* **Depressants:** decreased HR, BP, temperature, respirations, non-specific pupils
- \* **Stimulants:** increased HR, BP, temperature, dilated pupils, seizures
- \* **Anticholinergic:** increased HR, temperature, dilated pupils, mental status changes
- \* **Cardiac Meds:** dysrhythmias and mental status changes
- \* **Solvents:** nausea, vomiting, and mental status changes
- \* **Insecticides:** increased or decreased HR, increased secretions, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, pinpoint pupils
- \* An NG tube is required for charcoal administration in patients with (or with potential) for mental status changes, Requires order from **Medical Control**.
- \* Consider restraints if necessary for patient's and/or personnel's protection per the Restraint Policy.
- \* Consider contacting the North Carolina Poison Control Center (800-848-6946) if unable to contact Medical Control.
- \* **Activated Charcoal is an optional treatment with an order from Medical Control.**

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

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