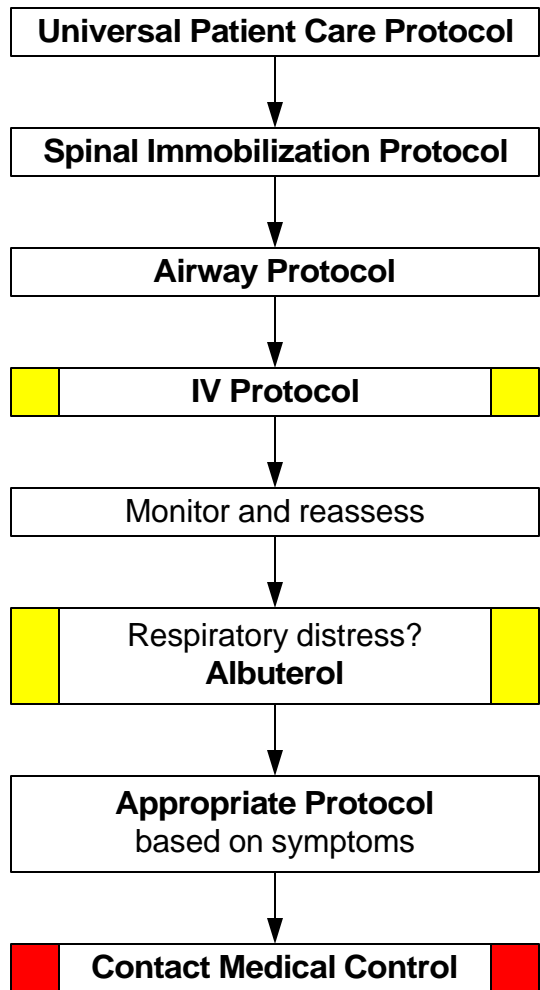


# FORSYTH COUNTY EMS Trauma Protocols

## Drowning / Near Drowning

<b>History:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Submersion in water regardless of depth</li> <li>* Possible history of trauma ie: diving board</li> <li>* Duration of immersion</li> <li>* Temperature of water</li> </ul>	<b>Signs and Symptoms:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Unresponsive</li> <li>* Mental status changes</li> <li>* Decreased or absent vital signs</li> <li>* Vomiting</li> <li>* Coughing</li> </ul>	<b>Differential:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* <b>Trauma</b></li> <li>* <b>Pre-existing medical problem</b></li> <li>* <b>Pressure injury (diving)</b> <b>Barotrauma</b> <b>Decompression sickness</b></li> </ul>
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Legend		
	MR / EMT	
	Expanded Scope EMT	
	EMT-I	
	EMT-P	
	Medical Control	

### Pearls:

- \* **Exam: Trauma Survey, Head, Neck, Chest, Abdomen, Pelvis, Back, Extremities, Skin, Neuro**
- \* With cold water no time limit -- resuscitate all.
- \* All victims should be transported for evaluation due to potential for worsening over the next several hours.
- \* **Drowning is the leading cause of death among would-be rescuers.**
- \* **Allow appropriately trained and certified rescuers to remove victims from areas of danger.**
- \* **With pressure injuries (decompression / barotrauma), consider transport or availability of a hyperbaric chamber.**

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

R.L. Alson, M.D.  
November, 2003