

Forsyth County EMS

Patient Care Policy: Poison Control Center

Background: The 9-1-1 Communications Center and responding Forsyth County Emergency Medical Services (FCEMS) personnel should utilize the state poison center to obtain assistance with the pre-hospital triage and treatment of patients who have a potential or actual poisoning.

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to improve the care of patients with poisonings, envenomations, and environmental/biochemical terrorism exposures in the pre-hospital setting, provide for the most timely and appropriate level of care to the patient, including the decision to transport or treat on the scene and integrate the State Poison Control Center into the pre-hospital response for hazardous materials and biochemical terrorism responses

1. The 9-1-1 Communications Center will identify complete EMD key questions for the Overdose/Poisoning, Carbon Monoxide / Inhalation / Haz-Mat, or Animal Bites / Attacks Emergency Medical Dispatch complaints and dispatch the appropriate EMS services and/or directly contact the State Poison Center for consultation.
2. If no immediate life threat or need for transport is identified, FCEMS personnel may conference the patient/caller with the Poison Center Specialist at the State Poison Center. If possible, 9-1-1 Communications personnel should remain on the line during conference evaluation.
3. The Poison Center Specialist at the State Poison Center will evaluate the exposure and make recommendations regarding the need for on-site treatment and/or hospital transport in a timely manner. If dispatch personnel are not on-line, the Specialist will again contact 9-1-1 Communications and communicate these recommendations.
4. If the patient is determined to need transport, the poison center Specialist will contact the receiving hospital and provide information regarding the poisoning, including treatment recommendations. FCEMS personnel may contact medical control for further instructions or to discuss transport options.
5. If the patient is determined not to require transport, personnel will give the phone number of the patient/caller to the Poison Center Specialist. The Specialist will initiate a minimum of one follow-up call to the patient/caller to determine the status of patient.

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6. Information that should be obtained from the patient for the state poison center includes but not limited to:
 - a) Name and age of patient
 - b) Substance(s) involved
 - c) Time of exposure
 - d) Any treatment given
 - e) Signs and symptoms

9. Information which should be provided to the state poison center for mass poisonings, including biochemical terrorism and Haz-Mat, includes but is not limited to:
 - a) Substance(s) involved
 - b) Time of exposure
 - c) Signs and symptoms
 - d) Any treatment given

If suspected Hazardous Materials or WMD event, EMS Medical Director on call will be notified by first arriving units and will make all medical decisions prior to contacting Poison Control.

Approved by:
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