



CONTINUITY OF THERAPY FOR OXYGEN DEPENDENT PATIENTS

PURPOSE

To establish a standard approach to providing oxygen to patients on chronic home oxygen therapy during interruptions in the patient's own source of oxygen that could occur with supply exhaustion, equipment malfunction, or power loss.

POLICY

An EMT or Paramedic may administer oxygen to a patient without the need to transport to an Emergency Department, provided:

The patient is on chronic home oxygen therapy;

AND

The patient requests EMS to provide oxygen therapy as a result of supply exhaustion, equipment malfunction, or power loss;

AND

The patient has no other complaints and does not wish to be transported to the hospital.

If the above criteria are met:

1. Perform routine history and physical exam.
2. Provide oxygen at the patient's prescribed home oxygen rate.
3. Any patient on home oxygen with symptoms other than dyspnea or mild hypoxia that is explained by the absence of home oxygen and rapidly corrects with oxygen administration at their prescribed dose must be transported to the Emergency Department.
4. Assist the patient with locating a source of oxygen to meet their home need.
 - a. Once the patient has re-established their own oxygen source, obtain an informed refusal of transport.
 - b. If the patient is unable to re-establish their own oxygen source (eg power failure, home displacement, etc), the patient may be moved to a location in which they can receive oxygen therapy (community center, public safety building, etc). Once moved to that location, obtain an informed refusal of transport.