



EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AGENCY
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"To advance the health of our communities by ensuring quality emergency and disaster medical services."



Health Services
<http://ems.dhs.lacounty.gov>

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TO: Distribution

VIA E-MAIL

FROM: Marianne Gausche-Hill, MD
Medical Director, EMS Agency

SUBJECT: **REFERENCE 845: TREAT AND REFER FOR MILD RESPIRATORY ILLNESS DURING COVID-19 OUTBREAK**

In order to address the rising number cases of COVID-19 transported to emergency departments for evaluation, we are implementing an EMS policy which allows for non-transport of **low-risk patients** that present with mild respiratory illness.

EMS providers may implement this policy for patients with a Provider Impression of Cold/Flu **only**; no other Provider Impressions qualify for implementation of this policy. Patients who are experiencing respiratory illness with associated shortness of breath or wheezing should be evaluated and transported as per current policy.

This policy excludes patients less than 12 months of age and greater than 65 years of age, homeless patients, and all patients with complaints of shortness of breath or chest pain or syncope, abnormal vital signs for age, and/or history of significant comorbid disease including COPD, CHF, cardiac disease, renal failure, diabetes, pregnancy, immunodeficiency, or an emergency medical condition per paramedic judgment.

An additional requirement is that patients **must** have a normal oxygen saturation (before and after ambulation). This requirement is critical for EMS providers to identify patients with more severe COVID-19 disease, as patients may have a normal oxygen saturation at rest but significant hypoxia with mild exertion.

These are challenging times for our entire health care system.

Thanks for your support of this policy.

Distribution:

- Fire Chief, Each Public EMS Provider Agency
- CEO, Ambulance Companies
- Medical Director, Each EMS Provider Agency
- Paramedic Coordinator, Each EMS Provider Agency
- Prehospital Care Coordinator, Each Base Hospital
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- Jaime Garcia, Hospital Association Southern California
- Director, Los Angeles Public Health