

Subject: Treatment Guidelines –BLS
Combative Patients

Associated Policies:

- I. Authority and Reference (incorporated herein by references)
 - A. Division 2.5 of Health and Safety Code
 - B. California code of Regulations, Title 22
 - C. North Coast EMS Policies and Procedures

- II. Purpose
 - A. To ensure the safety of both the patient and the patient attendants when dealing with combative patients.

- III. Policy
 - A. The responsibility for patient health care management rests with the highest medical authority on scene. Medical intervention and patient destination shall be determined by EMS prehospital personnel in consultation with their assigned base hospital, alternative base hospital, or modified base hospital.
 - B. Prehospital personnel must consider that aggressive or violent behavior may be a symptom of medical conditions such as:
 1. head trauma,
 2. alcohol,
 3. drug related problems,
 4. metabolic disorders,
 5. stress and
 6. psychiatric disorders.
 - C. The following verbal de-escalation guidelines should be employed:
 1. Remain calm and friendly. Be aware of your emotions.
 2. Position yourself between the patient and your exit.
 3. Keep your hands in front of your body (Non-threatening Manner).
 4. Only one provider should communicate with the patient.
 5. Maintain a soothing tone of voice.
 6. Listen to the patient's concerns.
 7. Empathize. Use positive feedback.
 8. Be reassuring. Outline the patient's choices.
 9. Be willing to slow down and disengage if appropriate.
 10. Calmly set boundaries of acceptable behavior.
 - D. If physical restraints are required to ensure patient and/or attendant safety, North Coast EMS Patient Restraint Policy # 6036 should be followed.
 - E. Once attendant and patient physical safety has been provided for, appropriate BLS treatment guidelines shall be followed for those conditions that require intervention.