



County of San Diego

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EMS TREATMENT CONSIDERATIONS DURING THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK

Best practices for management of the COVID-19 outbreak are dynamic due to the rapidly evolving situation and changing scientific knowledge. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance for [EMS providers](#) and [healthcare personnel](#) are continuously updated. All healthcare personnel should review these recommendations regularly.

EMS providers may **encounter a known or suspected symptomatic COVID-19 patient**. If prehospital providers have contact with a symptomatic patient meeting the current CDC criteria, they shall follow the [County of San Diego EMS Medical Director's PPE and exposure reporting directions](#) dated February 25, 2020.

[CDC has recommended EMS providers limit aerosol-generating treatments](#) whenever possible. Exercise caution during procedures that may be aerosol-generating including:

- Endotracheal intubation
 - Perilaryngeal/King airway preferred
- Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP)
- Nebulized medications
- Suctioning, and
- Bag valve mask (BVM) ventilation.
 - BVM ventilation should be equipped with a HEPA filter, if used.

Base hospital consultation is recommended for any patients that may otherwise receive one or more of these treatments. Lower flow nasal cannula oxygen (2-4 liters/per minute) is considered safe at this time for use if pulse oximetry <92%.

Thank you for your continued support and attention to managing this unprecedented event.

Respectfully,

Kristi L. Koenig, MD, FACEP, FIFEM, FAEMS, Medical Director
Emergency Medical Services
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cc: Nick Yphantides, MD, MPH, Chief Medical Officer
Andrew Parr, EMS Administrator