COVID-19: Field Triage Guidance

PURPOSE

To identify patients that are safe to assess and not transport to a hospital during widespread cases of confirmed COVID-19 virus. For additional information/explanation of this protocol, please see Coronavirus (COVID-19) EMS Response.

THIS PROTOCOL IS ONLY AUTHORIZED FOR PATIENTS WITH SIGNS OR SYMPTOMS CONSISTENT WITH COVID-19 (fever, or cough, or shortness of breath), OR CONCERNING CONTACT OR TRAVEL HISTORY.

INDICATION FOR COVID-19 FIELD TRIAGE PROTOCOL

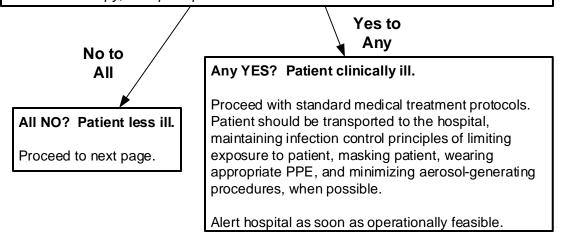
Local EMS District Medical Advisor has decided to enact field triage guidance based on local indications and consultation with hospital leadership, and Vermont EMS.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT

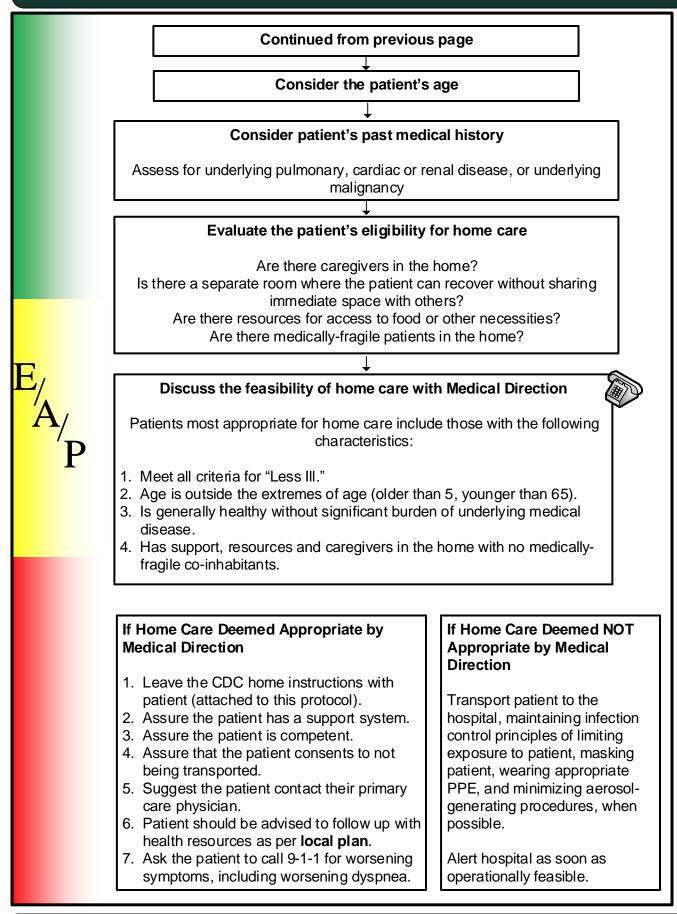
- If dispatch advises that the patient is:
 - Suspected of having infectious disease (COVID-19) or has had close contact with someone being evaluated for or diagnosed with COVID-19, OR
 - Patient is exhibiting symptoms including fever, or cough, or shortness of breath, THEN
 - EMS practitioners should put on appropriate PPE before entering the scene.
 - Initial assessment should begin from a distance of at least 6 feet from the patient and be limited to one EMS practitioner if possible.

EVALUATE PATIENT FOR SEVERITY OF DISEASE

- **Respiratory Distress?** severe breathlessness, unable to finish a sentence in one breath, use of accessory muscles, respiratory exhaustion
- Increased Respiratory Rate? over 30 breaths per minute in adult
- Oxygen Saturations less than 93% on RA (room air)?
- Evidence of Severe Dehydration or Shock? SBP less than 90 mmHg and/or DBP less than 60 mmHG, reduced skin turgor, severely dry mucous membranes, dizziness on postural changes
- Changes in Mental Status? any alteration of mental status, confusion, agitation, seizures, drowsiness, GCS < 15
- Chest Pain (other than mild with coughing)?
- Patient with worsening symptoms? especially in second week of illness
- Any history of immunosuppression? patients treated for HIV, patients receiving chemotherapy, transplant patients



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2020

10 ways to manage respiratory symptoms at home

If you have fever, cough, or shortness of breath, call your healthcare provider. They may tell you to manage your care from home. Follow these tips:

1. Stay home from work, school, and away from other public places. If you must go out, avoid using any kind of public transportation, ridesharing, or taxis.



2. Monitor your symptoms carefully. If your symptoms get worse, call your healthcare provider immediately.



3. Get rest and stay hydrated.



4. If you have a medical appointment, call the healthcare provider ahead of time and tell them that you have or may have COVID-19.



5. For medical emergencies, call 911 and **notify the dispatch personnel** that you have or may have COVID-19.



6. Cover your cough and sneezes.



7. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



8. As much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. Also, you should use a separate bathroom, if available. If you need to be around other people in or outside of the home, wear a facemask.



9. Avoid sharing personal items with other people in your household, like dishes, towels, and bedding.



10. Clean all surfaces that are touched often, like counters, tabletops, and doorknobs. Use household cleaning sprays or wipes according to the label instructions.



