



SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AGENCY, INC.

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MEMO

DATE: 5-7-07

TO: All SLO County ALS Providers

FROM: Thomas Ronay, M.D., FACEP
EMSA Medical Director

SUBJECT: Needle Cricothyrotomy Kits

Please be advised that there has been a recent incident in which the cap of a 10-gauge needle broke while performing a prehospital needle cricothyrotomy procedure. Upon closer inspection, it was discovered that the cap was brittle; though, it is unclear if the failure was due to a defect or aging.

A broken cap could prevent adequate insertion of the needle. Therefore, the EMSA is recommending that ALS providers check all needle cricothyrotomy and needle thoracotomy kits. If the packaging appears aged, then replace the kit.

Additionally, the EMSA is recommending that ALS field personnel use extra caution when removing these caps.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter, and please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have: 805-546-8728 ▪ info@sloemsa.org.