

RESPIRATORY DISTRESS

UNIVERSAL ALGORITHM

- Scene Safety
- PPE
- ABCs
- Administer Oxygen per Policy 580

Possible Medical Causes

- Asthma/Emphysema
- Bronchitis/Pneumonia
- Congestive Heart Failure
- Myocardial Infarction
- Metabolic imbalance
- Spontaneous Pneumothorax
- Pulmonary Embolus

Possible Traumatic Causes

- Blunt Thoracic Trauma
- Penetrating Thoracic Trauma
- Tension Pneumothorax
- Hemothorax
- Hypovolemic shock

- Reassure/calm patient
- Position of comfort
- Obtain vital signs
- Obtain medical history
- Gather medications or list

Special Information

- Monitor respiratory status closely
- Transport patient rapidly
- Consider reversible causes
- May assist in use of inhaler if one is prescribed to the patient