

EMT-I USE OF OXYGEN

I. DEFINITIONS:

- A. "Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)" - For the purposes of this document, the term Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) shall apply to all EMT-Is accredited to function in San Luis Obispo County.

II. PROCEDURES:

A. Oxygen Therapy

Oxygen therapy is required for patients with any of the following list of conditions. Oxygen should not be used routinely and should not be used on patients unless they have one of these conditions:

1. Acutely altered mental status or any acute neurological symptoms (to include syncope, seizure, stroke, numbness, etc.)
2. Shortness of breath or cyanosis or an elevated respiratory rate
3. Chest pain
4. Irregular pulse rate or pulse rate over 120/minute.
5. Shock of any cause
6. Any other condition described in the Basic Life Support Protocol Manual.

B. Method of Delivery

1. Use nasal cannula (2-6 liters/min.) when:
 - a) Oxygen in concentrations of 25-50% is desired.
 - b) Vomiting may occur.
 - c) Do not exceed 6 liters/min. flow rate.
 - d) Patient comfort is desired.
2. Use non-rebreathing oxygen mask (10-15 liters/min. - keep reservoir bag inflated) when:
 - a) high concentrations of O₂ (90-100%) are needed (e.g. severe dyspnea, shock)
 - b) vomiting is not expected
 - c) if the patient will not tolerate the mask due to anxiety switch to a nasal cannula.
 - d) when indicated in specific treatment protocols