Altered Level of Consciousness (ALOC)

For altered mental status not attributed to a more specific primary impression (i.e., cause unknown). Use as secondary primary impression when cause known.

**History**
- Known diabetic or medical alert tag
- Drugs or drug paraphernalia
- Report of illicit drug use or toxic ingestion
- Past medical history
- Medications
- History of trauma or traumatic brain injury
- Change in condition
- Changes in feeding or sleep habits

**Signs and Symptoms**
- Change in baseline mental status
- Decrease mental status or lethargy
- Bizarre behavior
- Hypoglycemia (cool, diaphoretic skin)
- Hyperpyrexia (warm, dry skin; fruity breath; Kussmaul respirations; signs of dehydration)
- Irritability

**Differential**
- Head trauma
- CNS (stroke, tumor, seizure, infection)
- Cardiac (MI, CHF)
- Hypothermia
- Thyroid
- Electrolyte abnormality
- Acidosis or alkalosis
- Environmental exposure
- Infection or sepsis
- Overdose or toxicological
- Under dose of prescribed medications
- Trauma
- Insulin or diabetic emergency
- Psychiatric disorder
- Sepsis or shock

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**Assess and manage airway**

**O**
- Blood glucose analysis
- Cardiac monitor
- Consider, 12-Lead ECG for any unexplained AMS
- IV/IO Procedure
- Consider, Naloxone

**P**

- Hypoglycemia
- Hyperglycemia

**E**

- Signs of Trauma
- Yes
- Trauma
- No

- Signs of shock/poor perfusion
- Yes
- Shock
- No

- Signs of OD/toxic exposure
- Yes
- Overdose/Poisoning/Ingestion
- No

- Signs of stroke or seizure
- Yes
- Seizure - Active
- No

- Signs of hypo/hyperthermia
- Yes
- Stroke/CVA/TIA
- No

- Arhythmia/STEMI
- Yes
- Chest Pain: STEMI
- No

- Signs of sepsis
- Yes
- Sepsis
- No

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**Notify receiving facility. Consider Base Hospital for medical direction**

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**Effective October 2019**
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Pearls

- Be aware of ALOC as a presenting sign of an environmental toxin or hazmat exposure and protect personal safety and that of other responders who may already be exposed.
- Consider restraints if necessary for patient or personnel protection.