TO: SAN MATEO COUNTY EMT’S AND PARAMEDICS
FROM: GREGORY GILBERT, MD, EMS MEDICAL DIRECTOR
DATE: JULY 23, 2014
SUBJECT: NORMAL SALINE

There is a national shortage of normal saline. While medical supply companies are variably affected with some being able to fill orders, others have placed restrictions on orders to re-supply normal saline inventories.

To address these issues, prudent use of saline is recommended. The following are guidelines for use:

1. Hang IV fluid for the following situations:
   a. Trauma criteria patients with a systolic blood pressure < 90 mm Hg.
   b. Suspected hypovolemic states with a systolic pressure < 90 mm Hg. These cases may present as suspected sepsis, dehydration, gastrointestinal hemorrhage, anaphylaxis, vomiting/diarrhea, agitated delirium, cardiac arrest with PEA rhythms, or hypotension with acute myocardial infarction without pulmonary edema.
   c. Administration of vein irritating medications such as calcium chloride.

2. When IV access is indicated in situations other than those listed above, use a saline lock. For IV medication administration only (no need for IV fluid replacements), the medication can be given through a saline lock with a 10 ml saline flush.

CC: Brad White, General Manager AMR
    John Odle, Executive Director, San Mateo County Pre-hospital Emergency Medical Services Group
    Louise Rogers, Interim EMS Administrator