

# Respiratory Arrest/Respiratory Failure

For patients requiring positive-pressure ventilation and/or hypoxia despite 100% oxygen

**History**

- Sudden onset of shortness of breath/coughing
- Past medical history
- Sudden loss of speech
- Syncope
- COPD/Asthma
- CHF
- Cardiac disease
- Lung disease

**Signs and Symptoms**

- Sudden onset of coughing, wheezing or gagging
- Stridor
- Inability to talk in complete sentences
- Panic
- Pointing to throat
- Syncope
- Cyanosis

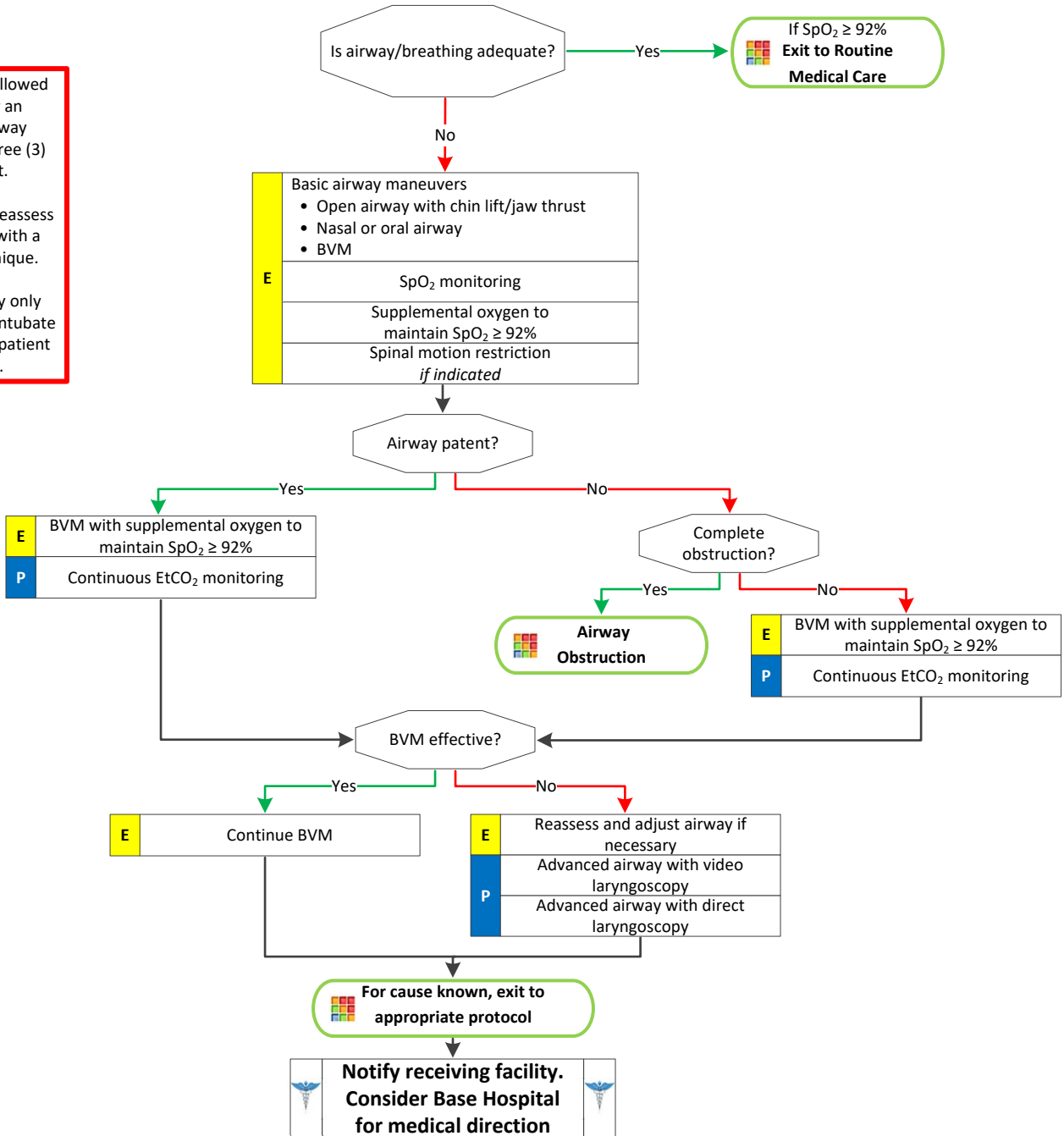
**Differential**

- Foreign body aspiration
- Seizure
- Epiglottitis
- Syncope
- Hypoxia
- Asthma/COPD
- CHF exacerbation
- Anaphylaxis
- Massive pulmonary embolus

The maximum allowed attempts for an advanced airway placement is three (3) per patient.

If attempts fail, reassess and approach with a different technique.

Use King airway only when unable to intubate or ventilate the patient with BVM.



Adult Respiratory Distress Treatment Protocols

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## Pearls

- Effective use of a BVM is best achieved with two (2) providers. Use adult BVM until cardiac arrest.
- Continuous capnometry (EtCO<sub>2</sub>) is mandatory with all intubations and BVM. Document results.
- If an effective airway is being maintained with a BVM and a basic airway adjunct with continuous pulse oximetry values of  $\geq 90\%$  or values expected based on pathophysiologic condition with otherwise reassuring vital sign (e.g., pulse oximetry of 85% with otherwise normal vital signs in a post-drowning patient), it is acceptable to continue with basic airway measures rather than placing an advanced airway.
- For the purposes of this treatment protocol (TP), a secure airway is achieved when the patient is receiving appropriate oxygenation and ventilation.
- An intubation attempt is defined as passing the laryngoscope blade or advanced airway past the teeth with the intent to intubate.
- An appropriate ventilatory rate is one that maintains an EtCO<sub>2</sub> of 35 to 55.
- The airway should be reassessed with each patient move. Document findings and EtCO<sub>2</sub> readings for each.
- Maintain spinal motion restriction for patients with suspected spinal injury.
- In deteriorating patients with head trauma, increase ventilation rate to maintain an EtCO<sub>2</sub> of 30-35.
- It is important to secure the advanced airway well and consider c-collar use (in the absence of trauma) to better maintain advanced airway placement. Manual stabilization of advanced airway should be used during all patient moves/transfers.

