# Submersion/Drowning

For any submersion injury, includina drownina and dive (decompression) emergencies

### History

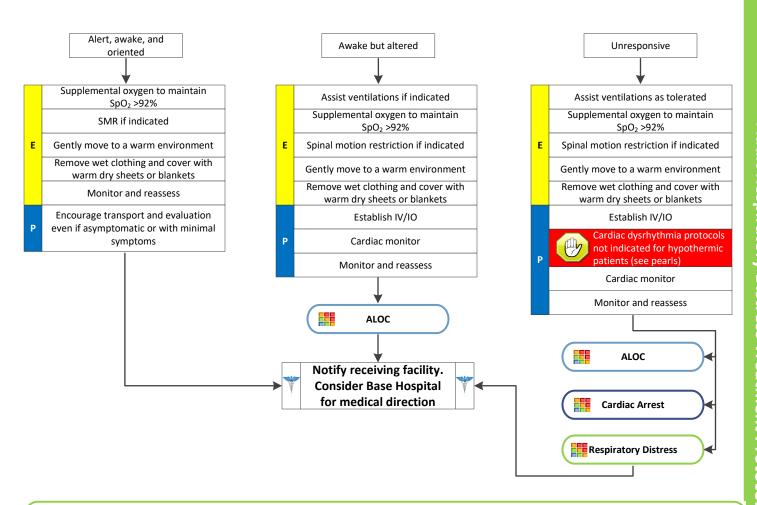
- Age
- · Duration of submersion
- Water temperature
- Type of water (salt, fresh, pool, etc.)
- SCUBA Diving
- Trauma possible? (Diving into pool)

#### Signs and Symptoms

- Airway Clear vs. Foam vs. water/vomit
- · Spontaneous Breathing
- ΔΝΛ
- Cold/Shivering
- · Motor neuro exam/priapism
- Bradycardia

#### **Differential**

- Hypothermia
- Hypoglycemia
- CNS dysfunction
  - Seizure
  - · Head injury
  - · Spinal cord injury



## Pearls

- Divers Alert Network 24-hour emergency phone number is (919) 684-9111.
- Check for pulselessness for 30-45 seconds to avoid unnecessary chest compressions.
- Defer ACLS medications until patient is warmed. Patients with hypothermia may have good neurologic outcome despite prolonged resuscitation; resuscitative efforts should continue until the patient is rewarmed.
- If V-Fib or pulseless V-Tach is present, shock x1, and defer further shocks due to concerns for hypothermia.
- Extremes of age, malnutrition, alcohol, and other drug use are contributing factors to hypothermia.
- It is important to have baseline blood glucose. If the patient is or becomes altered, check blood glucose and treat accordingly.
- Patients with prolonged hypoglycemia often become hypothermic; blood glucose analysis is essential.
- If a temperature is unable to be measured, treat the patient based on the suspected temperature.
- Warm packs can be placed in the armpit and groin areas. Care should be taken not to place directly on skin.



Treatment Protocol R09