



PROVINCIAL COMMISSIONER'S DIRECTIVE

Directive No.
09/98

Issued
01 December 1998

Supersedes
02/98

Subject

ASSISTING WITH THE ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS - BRIGADE PATIENT CARE PROVIDERS

Direction

Patient Care Providers in the Brigade, as part of their training and service, may assist patients with the administration of certain medications, under certain conditions. These medications include: Nitroglycerin, ASA (Aspirin®), EpiPen®, Ana-Kit® and Asthma Inhalers.

NITROGLYCERIN AND/OR ASA (Aspirin®) FOR CHEST PAIN

Under the following conditions/protocols, Brigade Patient Care Providers may assist with the administration of prescribed Nitroglycerin and/or ASA (Aspirin®):

1. As soon as chest pain is detected by the Patient Care Provider, medical help should be called.
2. While waiting for medical help, assist the patient to the most comfortable position, usually semisitting with the head and shoulders raised and supported, and loosen tight clothing at the neck, chest and waist. Reassure the patient. Assist the fully conscious patient to take appropriate medications as described on the next page:

cont...

Authority

Provincial Commissioner

Authority

Provincial Medical Officer

Direction (cont.)

3. **Ask the fully conscious patient if he/she carries heart medication such as nitroglycerin,** and ensure that you have the correct tablet or spray before assisting the patient to take Nitro. Nitroglycerin tablets are placed and dissolve quickly under the tongue. Alternatively, Nitroglycerin spray can be sprayed under the tongue. The pills or spray start working within one to two minutes and work for about five to six minutes. *(One nitroglycerin tablet or spray may be repeated every 5-10 minutes until the pain is relieved, or until a maximum of three tablets or sprays have been taken.)*
4. **Ask the conscious patient if ASA (Aspirin®) is carried.**
Patient Care Providers may recommend that the patient take the ASA (Aspirin®) and explain why, but they are cautioned that the patient makes the final decision whether or not to take a medication.
5. **The Patient Care Provider should ask if the patient is allergic to ASA (Aspirin®) or has asthma.** ASA (Aspirin®) should not be taken if such an allergy exists or the patient has asthma. *NOTE: People with peptic ulcers, or bleeding disorders would normally avoid ASA (Aspirin®), but in this case, one dose of medication may do more good than harm.*
6. **If the patient does not carry an angina medication (e.g. nitro.), or the chest pain is not relieved by the first tablet or spray,** the Patient Care Provider should suggest the patient chew 2 children's ASA (Aspirin®) tablets (80 mg. each) OR one ASA (Aspirin®) tablet (regular strength, not enteric coated adult dose = 325 mg.) Do not substitute acetaminophen (Tylenol®).
7. After administration of the ASA (Aspirin®) continue with the nitroglycerine regime *(Two more doses if required, 5-10 minutes apart for a maximum of three doses.)*
8. Monitor respiration and pulse and be ready to provide artificial respiration or CPR.
9. When reporting to medical aid (written and/or verbally), report the type of medication given, the amount given, the time(s) medication was given and the frequency.

EPINEPHRINE (Ana-Kit®/EpiPen®) AND ASTHMA INHALERS

Epinephrine (Ana-Kit®/EpiPen®) may be included in Mobile First Aid Units labelled "**for administration by a physician or his/her designate**". Brigade Patient Care Providers may assist with the administration of Epinephrine and asthma inhalers provided proper protocol is followed.

Protocols regarding the administration of Epinephrine and inhalers can be found on pages 4-38 to 4-41 of the St. John Ambulance "First On The Scene" Manual - A Complete Guide to First Aid and CPR, 1st Edition, 1995.

It is imperative that Brigade Patient Care Providers receive appropriate training (including regular refreshers), and that as standards change, the newest standards are taught and followed.

NOTE: Expiration dates on all medications must be checked prior to use. Medications must be disposed of properly if the date has expired.