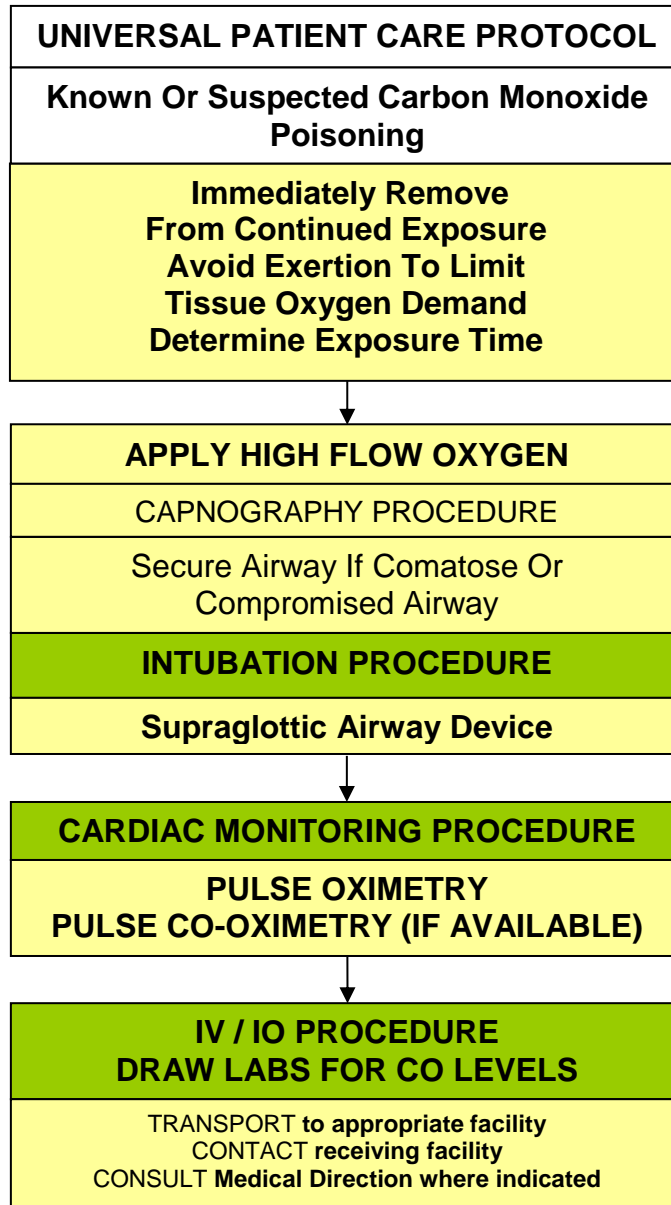




Section 5: Adult Medical Emergencies Protocol

ADULT MEDICAL EMERGENCIES: TOXIC INHALATION / CARBON MONOXIDE

E	EMT	E
A	AEMT	A
P	PARAMEDIC	P
M	MED CONTROL	M



CO Levels

<10% Mild
10% - 20% Moderate
>20% Severe
Special Considerations for Pregnant Females and Children



Section 5: Adult Medical Emergencies Protocol

ADULT MEDICAL EMERGENCIES: TOXIC INHALATION / CARBON MONOXIDE-Cont.

HISTORY	SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS	DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inhalation of potentially carbon monoxide containing atmosphere Duration of exposure Reason (suicidal, accidental, criminal) Past medical history, medications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Malaise, fatigue, drowsiness Flu like symptoms Headache Dyspnea Nausea / vomiting Diarrhea Abdominal pain Dizziness Visual disturbances Memory disturbances Syncope Seizures Coma Incontinence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flu / severe cold Chronic fatigue Migraine Myocardial infarction Diabetic emergencies Altitude sickness Ingested toxins Meningitis Hypothyroidism

CO Levels

<10% Mild

10% - 20% Moderate

>20% Severe

Special Considerations for Pregnant Females and Children

GREATER CLEVELAND POISON CONTROL 1-800-222-1222

- Exam: Mental Status, Skin, HEENT, Heart, Lungs, Abdomen, Extremities, Neuro
- Consider CO poisoning with any patient exposed to products of combustion.
- Causes and exposure may include malfunctioning gas appliances, vehicle exhaust, improper use of gas burning heaters, animal dung, environmental waste and fires.
- Normal CO levels do not necessarily mean there was not CO poisoning. This is especially true if the patient has already received extensive oxygen therapy.
- Patients that show signs and symptoms at lower CO levels include: pregnant females, infants, children and the elderly.
- Vitals may be normal but could be tachycardic, hypo or hypertensive.
- Cherry red skin is rarely seen. "When you're red your dead"!
- PREGNANT patients are special circumstances as the affinity for fetal hemoglobin to carbon monoxide is very high and therapy including hyperbaric care is considered early on.
- Patients that demonstrate altered mental status may NOT sign refusals for treatment or transport.
- Known or suspected CO poisoning patients should receive high flow oxygen despite Spo2 readings.
- The use of a pulse oximeter is not effective in the diagnosis of carbon monoxide poisoning, as patients suffering from carbon monoxide poisoning may have a normal oxygen saturation level on a pulse oximeter.
- Pulse oximetry is still used on all CO poisonings as hypoxia in addition to the CO represents serious compounding respiratory issues possibly from other causes.**
Pulse CO-oximeters estimate carboxyhemoglobin levels with a non-invasive finger clip similar to a pulse oximeter.