



Section 1: Administrative / Medical Control

GUIDELINE/PROCEDURES: OBESE/BARIATRIC PATIENTS

All individuals served by the EMS system will be evaluated, furnished transportation (if indicated) in the most timely and appropriate manner for each individual situation.

PURPOSE

To provide:

- Rapid emergency EMS transport when needed.
- Appropriate medical stabilization and treatment at the scene when necessary.
- Protection of patients, EMS personnel, and citizens from undue risk when possible.

PROCEDURE

1. Each situation may dictate its own procedure for the transport of morbidly obese patients.
2. It is the responsibility of EMS personnel at the scene to provide the most appropriate medical care, including the protection of the patient, EMS personnel, and bystanders, while transporting morbidly obese patients.
3. Utilization of additional resources may be required, at the discretion of the on - scene EMS personnel.

In any community there may be one or more individuals who fall into this extreme. As patients, these individuals are frequently classed as high risk because of the increased medical complications associated with their excess weight. In the EMS system they present the additional problem of movement and transportation. These individuals have the right to expect prompt and expert emergency medical care. Therefore, in order to facilitate the care of these individuals without risking the health of EMS workers, the following protocol is established.

- In managing a patient that is morbidly obese, at no time should the patient be moved without sufficient manpower to assist.
- At the scene, as many EMS personnel as can be mobilized may be supplemented by police or other safety personnel as appropriate. If sufficient manpower is not available, mutual aid may be required.
- It may be necessary to remove doors, walls or windows. The situation is no different than extrication from a vehicle, although property damage may be higher. At all times the patient's life must be the first priority.
- The patient is to be placed on at least 2 (double) backboards or other adequate transfer device for support.
- The patient is to be loaded on a cot that is in the down position, and the cot is to be kept in the down position at all times. Be aware of the cot weight limitations.
- It is necessary to notify the hospital well in advance of arrival so that preparations can be completed in a timely fashion.
- If individuals in the community are known to fall within this special category it is appropriate to inform them in advance of the type of assistance they can expect from the EMS system, and help them make plans well in advance to assist you.
- When calling for the squad, and if they identify themselves and their special needs, it will promote the timeliness of your efforts.