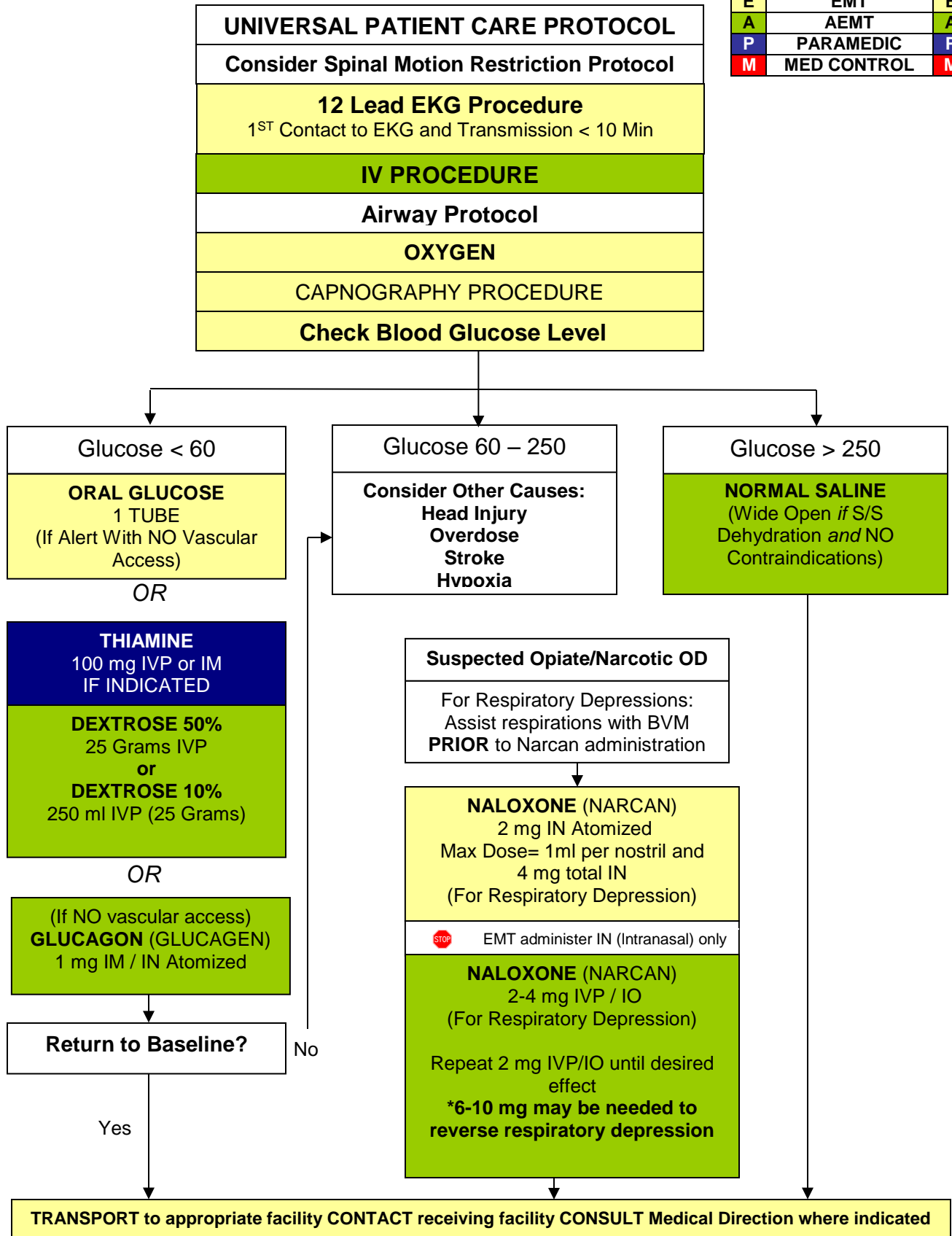




Section 5: Adult Medical Emergencies Protocol

ADULT MEDICAL EMERGENCIES: ALTERED LEVEL OF CONSCIOUSNESS

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





Section 5: Adult Medical Emergencies Protocol

ADULT MEDICAL EMERGENCIES: ALTERED LEVEL OF CONSCIOUSNESS-Cont.

PEARLS and KEY POINTS

HISTORY	SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS	DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Known diabetic, medic alert tag• Drugs, drug paraphernalia• Report of illicit drug use or toxic ingestion• Past medical history• Medications• History of trauma	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decreased mental status• Change in baseline mental status• Bizarre behavior• Hypoglycemia (cool, diaphoretic skin)• Hyperglycemia (warm, dry skin; fruity breath; Kussmaul resps; signs of dehydration)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Head trauma• CNS (stroke, tumor, seizure, infection)• Cardiac (MI, CHF)• Infection• Thyroid (hyper / hypo)• Shock (septic, metabolic, traumatic)• Diabetes (hyper / hypoglycemia)• Toxicological incident• Acidosis / alkalosis• Environmental exposure• Pulmonary (hypoxia)• Electrolyte abnormality• Psychiatric disorder

- Exam: Mental Status, HEENT, Skin, Heart, Lungs, Abdomen, Back, Extremities, Neuro
- Be aware of AMS as potential sign of an environmental toxin or Haz-Mat exposure and protect personal safety.
- It is safer to assume hypoglycemia than hyperglycemia if doubt exists.
- Do not let alcohol confuse the clinical picture. Alcoholics frequently develop hypoglycemia and need Thiamine before glucose.
- Low glucose (< 60), normal glucose (60 - 120), high glucose (> 250).
- Consider restraints if necessary for patient's and / or personnel's protection per the restraint procedure.
- Protect the patient airway and support ABCs.
- Document the patient's glasgow coma score pre and post treatment.
- Signs and symptoms of narcotic overdose include respiratory depression and altered mental status.
- Naloxone (Narcan) administration may cause the patient to go into acute opiate withdrawal, which includes vomiting, agitation, and / or combative behavior. Always be prepared for combative behavior.
- Narcan 6-10 mg may be needed to reverse respiratory depression. Repeat 2 mg IV/IO every 3 min until desired effect is achieved.