



Yolo County Health & Human Services Agency



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Date: September 11, 2018
To: Yolo County EMS Providers and Agencies
From: Yolo County EMS Agency
Subject: IV Acetaminophen (Tylenol)

Memorandum

As part of the overall strategy for the management of the national drug shortages detailed in the memo on May 11, 2018, the State Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) has approved our "Local Optional Scope of Practice" (LOSOP) application for the use of IV Acetaminophen. Due to the rapidly decreasing stock of Fentanyl in Yolo County, YEMSA will be releasing the new Pain Management Protocol with the September 15, 2018 Policy and Protocol updates instead of the initially planned release on January 1, 2018.

All ALS Providers in Yolo County will receive an invitation to a short training on Mindflash. Please complete the training for IV administration of Acetaminophen by September 25, 2018.

Acetaminophen is the most commonly used medication in the world for fever and pain control and is on the World Health Organization's List of Essential Medications. IV Acetaminophen offers a unique advantage to the prehospital setting given its rapid onset of action. Studies have shown that IV Acetaminophen can reach higher serum concentrations more rapidly compared to the same dose of oral Acetaminophen, and the time to reach these peak plasma concentration is 30 minutes faster than the PO formulation. IV Acetaminophen offers several advantages. When administered intravenously, Acetaminophen decreases exposure to the liver because of first-pass metabolism, thus exposing patients to less hepatotoxicity. The use of Acetaminophen also offers a non-opioid and non-controlled substance alternative for prehospital pain management. In light of the recent opioid shortages and opioid epidemic that has been well recognized in the United States, the application of Acetaminophen offers a more available and less addictive option for prehospital analgesia.

Below are a few reminders about pain management:

- The use of opioids should be reserved for **severe, acute pain** not relieved by other measures. Conditions such as STEMI, polytrauma with long bone fractures, and burns are situations where opioid pain management is clearly clinically indicated. Many other conditions do not likely require an opioid during transport. The Pain Management Protocol has been divided into two (2) sections; Mild to Moderate Pain (1-6) and Severe Pain (7-10). In conjunction with BLS pain management, IV Acetaminophen is effective management for mild to moderate pain.
- A person's pain response is variable and complex. Compassionate communication with support and understanding goes a long way toward helping a patient in pain. Effective opioid stewardship is important for all of us to practice.

Thank you for your dedication and outstanding care!