
Dead on Scene

Aliases: DOA, DOS

I. Dead on Scene inclusion criteria:

Initiate or continue CPR for patient found to be in cardiac arrest UNLESS one or more of the following conditions exists:

- A. Decomposition
- B. Rigor mortis (Caution: do not confuse with stiffness due to cold environment)
- C. Dependent lividity
- D. Decapitation
- E. Incinerated or frozen body
- F. Submersion greater than 1 hour (90 minutes in cold water)
- G. Gross dismemberment or obvious mortal wounds/conditions (injuries inconsistent with life – i.e., crushing injuries of the head and/or chest)
- H. Unwitnessed arrest of traumatic origin, without organized electrical activity (must be asystolic or other rhythm with rate less than 40/min).
- I. Patient has a valid “Do Not Resuscitate” identification bracelet or order.
- J. In cases of mass casualty incidents, where the number of patients exceeds the providers and resources to care for them, any patient who is pulseless and apneic may be triaged as deceased.

II. Specific Exceptions

- A. Patients who are struck by lightning, are hypothermic or victims of cold water drowning (unless submersion time is over 1 hour) do not qualify for use of this policy.
- B. EMS personnel may initiate resuscitation efforts based upon professional judgement of viability, or if there is any concern over the validity of DNR orders, when present.

III. Procedure

- A. If none of the inclusion criteria are present, continue CPR and proceed to the appropriate treatment protocol
- B. If any of the above inclusion criteria, and none of the exclusion criteria, are met, cease CPR (if performed) and refer to the **Determination of Death, Death in an Ambulance and Transport of a Body Protocol**.