



Oakland County Medical Control Authority  
**Emergency\* System Protocols**  
Decision to Transport During COVID-19 Protocol

December 2, 2021

Section 11.06

***Decision to Transport During COVID-19 Protocol***

**Purpose:** To reduce the number of patients transported to the hospital that are suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 infection, who do not require immediate treatment and/or hospitalization.

- I. Emergency medical calls related to patients that have tested positive for COVID-19 will likely fit into one of the three following categories:
  - a. **Asymptomatic:** Confirmed positive for COVID-19 infection.
  - b. **Acutely ill patients with minor symptoms:** Confirmed to have COVID-19 infection.
  - c. **Acutely ill patients with severe symptoms:** Confirmed to have COVID-19 infection.
  
- II. **Asymptomatic:**
  - a. Those patients who have a positive COVID-19 should self-quarantine, assuring they avoid contact with at risk populations, and monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 infection. Advise the patient that if they have any further concerns they should contact their primary care physician, or they may contact the Oakland County Health Division: 248-858-1286.
  
- III. **Acutely ill patients with minor symptoms:**
  - a. Confirmed to have COVID-19 infection, who lack risk factors for developing severe complications, should avoid transport to the hospital, if at all possible. The following signs and symptoms alone do not indicate the need for immediate medical attention and transport:
    - a. Body aches
    - b. Sore throat
    - c. Headache
    - d. Fever
    - e. Mild nausea/vomiting/diarrhea
  - b. If the acutely ill patient complaining of minor symptoms possesses any of the following risk factors, immediate medical attention and transport are indicated due to their increased risk of developing severe complications:
    - i. Age  $\geq$  65
    - ii. Cardiovascular disease
    - iii. COPD
    - iv. Diabetes (Obesity)
    - v. Hypertension
    - vi. Immunosuppressed
    - vii. Immunosuppression / Chemotherapy

MCA Name: Oakland County

MCA Board Approval Date: Dr. McGraw, EMS Medical Director

MCA Implementation Date: December 2, 2021



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**IV. Sign-off Procedure:**

- a. Advise patients that your EMS Medical Director has issued a standing order that all patients suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 infection, presenting asymptomatic or mild symptoms only, and lacking risk factors, should; stay home, isolate, rest, hydrate, take comfort measure as needed, and self-monitor. If serious symptoms develop, they should seek immediate medical attention and call 9-1-1. Advise the patient that they should warn the 9-1-1 dispatcher of the COVID-19 risk.
- b. If the patient insists on being transported, they must be transported.
- c. Advise the patient that by signing the “refusal signature” they are acknowledging that they have received and understand the instructions they have been given and will call 9-1-1 in the event that they develop serious symptoms.
  1. Obtain a witness signature. A signature of another healthcare provider will suffice as a witness signature.
- d. EMS providers should note in their documentation narrative that the patient was given a complete description of the symptoms associated with severe infection, and that the patient was advised to call 9-1-1 if they developed any of these symptoms.
  1. A list of serious symptoms can be found in this protocol, see list below.

**V. Acutely ill patients with severe symptoms:** Patients confirmed to have COVID-19 infection, should be transported to the closest appropriate hospital. The following signs and symptoms indicate the need for immediate medical attention and transport:

- a. Hypoxia (< 90% on room air)
- b. Respiratory distress/Shortness of breath with minimal exertion OR Resp. Rate > 28 at rest
- c. Chest pain/tightness
- d. Confusion/Altered mental status
- e. Severe nausea/Vomiting/Diarrhea
- f. Signs of severe dehydration or shock, including; syncope, severe dizziness, or hypertension

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