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14B – ACTIONS TO PRESERVE CRIME SCENES

EMERGENCY MEDICAL DISPATCHER
EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONDER
EMT
EMT-INTERMEDIATE 85
ADVANCED EMT
PARAMEDIC

This protocol has been developed to promote proper emphasis on patient care while simultaneously promoting law enforcement ability to conduct effective and thorough crime scene investigation.

A. Only assigned EMS units should respond. Excess numbers of EMS professionals on scene may lead to inadvertent evidence destruction.
B. When approaching a crime scene protected by law enforcement, EMS professionals should request entry into the area to determine life status of the individual. The highest licensed EMS professional (eg. Paramedic if on scene) is to enter in cases of probable irreversible death to minimize scene disturbance. Attempt scene entry and exit by same route to minimize scene disturbance.
C. If law enforcement professionals refuse EMS access into the crime scene, do not become confrontational. Follow applicable operational procedures in consulting with an appropriate Supervisor.
D. Refer to Protocol 4K -"Do Not Resuscitate"/Advanced Directive Orders, Futility of Resuscitation Initiation & Termination of Resuscitation – Adult & Pediatric for information regarding when to withhold resuscitation.
E. To obtain an ECG tracing when the probable irreversibly dead patient is prone:

(If using a 4-lead cable) place the left arm electrode on the left arm or upper left back. Place the right arm electrode on the right arm or upper right back. Place the left leg electrode on the lower portion of the left back or on the left leg. Place the right leg electrode on the lower portion of the right back or on the right leg. Alternatively, use monitoring/defibrillation pads. Place the sternum electrode on the upper right back and the apex electrode on the lower left back.

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F. If the patient has signs of life, aggressive resuscitative efforts should be initiated. During scene resuscitation:

1. Keep EMS professionals and medical equipment close to the victim.
2. Keep out of any blood that has pooled.
3. Minimize destruction of the patient's clothing. If the patient's clothing has a puncture, do not use the hole to start cutting and do not cut “through” the hole.

G. In crime victim resuscitation, work to move the victim to the ambulance expeditiously.

H. If the patient relates any information relating to the crime, report this information to the appropriate law enforcement professionals.

Special Notes:

1. **DO NOT** go through the victim's personal effects (if the victim has expired).
2. **DO NOT** cover the body with a sheet or other material (if the victim has expired).
3. **DO NOT** move or handle any object at the scene unless absolutely essential for life-saving medical care. Inform law enforcement professionals of any such movement or handling, preferably before doing so.
4. **DO NOT** take any object from the scene unless absolutely essential for life-saving medical care (eg. impaled object).
5. **DO NOT** clean the body of blood, etc. (if the victim has expired)
6. **DO NOT** wander around the crime scene; return to the emergency vehicle.
7. **DO NOT** litter the crime scene with medical equipment, dressings, bandages, etc.