

Infectious Diseases

19.01

EMSP may be first on the scene of a potential infectious disease situation. This guideline is intended to assist EMSP with identifying signs, symptoms, and appropriate management. Based on information from dispatch, EMSP should have a suspicion of any infectious disease potential. EMSP should don the appropriate PPE prior to entering the scene. If EMSP encounters individuals with symptoms of infectious diseases prior to donning PPE, stay more than six (6) feet away from individuals with symptoms and exercise appropriate PPE precautions. Once a specific Serious Infectious Disease (SID) has been confirmed, or has been suspected, the EMSP should contact the TCC for further instructions related to the disease. ADPH plans for specific SID's should be followed upon confirmation or orders from a Medical Control Physician.

Signs and Symptoms of Most Infectious Diseases

1. Rapid onset of symptoms
2. Difficulty breathing with exertion
3. Cough
4. Fever
5. Pleuritic chest pain
6. Nasal congestion
7. Muscle aches
8. Shaking chills
9. Sore throat
10. Headache
11. Diarrhea
12. Fatigue
13. Recent travel to infected regions

Those who exhibit fever, severe headaches, muscle pain, weakness, fatigue, diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal pain, and unexplained hemorrhaging (or bruising), and have recently travelled to the Congo, or the West Central region of Africa, may have contracted the Ebola virus. For those who are suspected of having Ebola, prior to transporting the patient, contact the ATCC for further instructions.

Ambulance Preparation

1. Any nonessential equipment that can be removed from the compartment of the ambulance before transport will hasten the time needed to disinfect and return to service.

2. Ensure good patient compartment vehicle airflow/ventilation (turn on exhaust fan) to reduce the concentration of aerosol accumulation when possible.
3. If necessary seal cabinets and drape interior, including floor and squad bench, with plastic or visqueen.
4. All patients with acute febrile respiratory illness should wear a surgical mask, if tolerated by the patient.

Transport and Arrival at the Hospital

1. When transporting a patient with symptoms of acute febrile respiratory illness, notify the receiving healthcare facility so that appropriate infection control precautions may be taken prior to patient arrival.
2. All EMSP engaged in aerosol generating activities (e.g. endotracheal intubation, bag-mask ventilation, nebulizer treatment, or CPAP [use expiratory filter]) should wear the appropriate PPE
3. The receiving hospital should be contacted as soon as possible. The EMSP should communicate patient condition and potential infectious disease.
4. EMSP should follow hospital procedures upon arrival in regards to patient routing.
5. Routine cleaning methods should be used throughout the transport vehicle and on non-disposable equipment. Routine cleaning with soap or detergent and water to remove soil and organic matter, followed by the proper use of disinfectants, are the basic components of effective environmental management of infectious diseases. Reducing the number of particles on a surface through these steps can reduce the chance of hand transfer of any particles.

Any disposable equipment should be placed in a biohazard bag and disposed of following a biohazard plan for infectious diseases.