



State of Maryland

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To: Maryland PSAP Directors
Maryland PSAP Medical Directors

From: Timothy Chizmar, MD, FACEP
State EMS Medical Director

R. Ross Coates
Chairman, MACO Emergency Communications Committee

Date: April 13, 2020

RE: Mouth-to-mouth ventilations during COVID-19 Catastrophic Health Emergency

In order to limit the risk of disease transmission to bystanders during the COVID-19 pandemic, we recommend that the pre-arrival instructions for mouth-to-mouth (M-T-M) ventilations be suspended for all cases of cardiac arrest in patients who are 18 years of age and older.

This recommendation was informed by guidance from the American Heart Association (AHA), several medical specialty society experts, and a consensus of the Maryland PSAP directors and PSAP medical directors.

In discussion with the PSAP directors of the Emergency Communications Committee of MACO, the following recommendations should be implemented as soon as possible.

The 9-1-1 Specialist should now use the Compressions Only pathway for all patients in cardiac arrest who are 18 years of age or older. When referencing the Pathway Director for Allergic Reactions, Asthma/COPD, Drowning, Hanging, Lightning Strike, Overdose/Poisoning, Severe Trauma, Strangulation, Suffocation and Toxic Inhalation, the Ventilations First Pathway will not be used. All of these will now be handled under the Compressions Only Pathway by selecting Compressions Only Pathway or Refused M-T-M.

If the patient is under the age of 18, the 9-1-1 Specialist should still follow the Pathway Director and use Ventilations First, Compressions First, or the Compressions Only pathway as recommended by the protocol.

This recommendation is being issued in response to the Catastrophic Public Health Emergency, and will be rescinded on the date of termination of the State of Emergency and Catastrophic Public Health Emergency, originally declared by Governor Hogan on March 5, 2020.

Reference:

Edelson, et al. "Interim Guidance for Life Support for COVID-19." *Circulation*. E-pub ahead of print.
<https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1161/CIRCULATIONAHA.120.047463>. Accessed April 11, 2020.