



Altered Mental Status

FIELD TREATMENT GUIDELINE M-05

INDICATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patients presenting with an acutely altered mental status. 										
BLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow General Medical Care M-01. For pediatric patients, follow General Pediatric Care P-01. Assess patient's Glasgow Coma Scale. Evaluate possible causes of change in mental status using AEIOU TIPS. <p>SUSPECTED POISONING/OVERDOSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to Poisoning/Overdose M-09. <p>SUSPECTED HYPOGLYCEMIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If awake, able to hold head upright, and gag reflex is present, assist the patient to self-administer Oral Glucose. Patient MUST be able to swallow without difficulty. If not awake, not able to swallow, unable to hold head upright, or there is no gag reflex, maintain airway and left lateral position. <p>SYNCOPE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess for underlying causes, e.g., stroke, cardiac, hypoglycemia, trauma, sepsis, shock. <p>SEIZURES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If suspected seizure activity, refer to Seizures M-06. <p>STROKE/CVA/TIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If suspected stroke/CVA/TIA, refer to Stroke/CVA/TIA M-19. 										
ALS	<p>HYPOGLYCEMIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dextrose 10%: If blood glucose is < 60 mg/dL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Adult:</i> 25 g IV/IO. If altered mental status is not resolved and blood glucose remains < 60 mg/dL, may repeat in 5 gram increments every 5 minutes. Use best judgement if altered mental status persists and the blood sugar is between 60-80 mg/dL. <i>Pediatric:</i> IV/IO; If altered mental status is not resolved and blood glucose remains < 60 mg/dL, may repeat once in 5 minutes. Administer according to PediaTape weight calculation and Pediatric Medication Reference Cards. 										
KEY CONCEPTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential causes of altered mental status: AEIOU TIPS <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">A – Alcohol/Acidosis</td> <td style="width: 50%;">T – Trauma/Toxins</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E – Epilepsy/Environment</td> <td>I – Infection (sepsis)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I – Insulin (diabetes)</td> <td>P – Psychogenic</td> </tr> <tr> <td>O – Overdose/Oxygen</td> <td>S – Stroke/Shock</td> </tr> <tr> <td>U – Uremia</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> 	A – Alcohol/Acidosis	T – Trauma/Toxins	E – Epilepsy/Environment	I – Infection (sepsis)	I – Insulin (diabetes)	P – Psychogenic	O – Overdose/Oxygen	S – Stroke/Shock	U – Uremia	
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