Mercy EMS Education

Clinical Operations

November 1, 2026

ALS Intercepts and Patient Attendance

When a BLS ambulance requests an ALS intercept, consider the patient an ALS patient.

The ALS provider should evaluate and attend the patient unless system status or applicable protocol dictates otherwise.

Chest pain, dizziness, weakness, and other potentially significant complaints warrant ALS evaluation and transport.

Cardiac Arrest: Mechanical CPR and Transport

With an automated compression device, shockable rhythms, younger age, intermittent or persistent organized electrical activity, and sustained higher $ETCO_2$ may be favorable prognostic indicators.

When $ETCO_2$ remains elevated, strongly consider transport based on the overall clinical picture, reversible causes.

Chest Pain: Maintain Suspicion for ACS

Reproducible chest wall tenderness does not rule out acute coronary syndrome or myocardial infarction.

Some studies show up to 30% frequency of reproducible tenderness among cardiac chest-pain patients – avoid using reproducible chest pain as a rule out of cardiac causes.

Indigestion, reflux, or heartburn symptoms do not exclude cardiac ischemia. Maintain a high index of suspicion.

Open Fractures: Early Antibiotics

Consider early antibiotics for all open fractures

Early antibiotics can reduce infection risk and complications associate to compound fractures.