Blood Draw for Alcohol Analysis

PROCEDURE

STEPS

1. Confirm the request is at the scene of a dispatched medical call — draws happen nowhere else
2. Obtain consent: informed from an alert, oriented patient; implied if the patient is unresponsive, deceased, or unable to consent
3. Universal precautions; open the law-enforcement-supplied kit — use only that kit
4. Draw the sample per the kit instructions, using its cleansing wipes, needle, tube, and label
5. Drawing from the IV site is allowable if that site was not prepped with alcohol wipes
6. Label and hand over the sample per kit instructions and chain of custody
7. Document the procedure in the narrative, including the arresting officer's name and badge number
8. Obtain the patient's signature when consent was informed

BEFORE YOU START

- Paramedics only — this is Policy 2-11 work, drawn by the Mercy paramedic at the scene
- Patient care comes first: the patient's rights and well-being outrank the draw
- Only when law enforcement requests it for reasons other than primary patient care

KIT YOU NEED

- The blood collection kit supplied by the law enforcement official — and only that kit
- Its site cleansing wipes (not alcohol prep), collection needle, tube, and label
- Universal precautions / PPE

IF IT GOES WRONG

- Asked to draw at the sheriff's office, police HQ, or the station: decline — direct officers to the nearest emergency department
- Alert patient refuses: consent is required — do not draw, and document the refusal
- Why no alcohol wipes: they are not the ethanol being tested, but alcohol prep is used as an argument in court

Take Home Message:

Scene only, consent first, their kit only, no alcohol prep — and the officer's name and badge number go in your narrative.