

CARE AND TRANSPORT OF PATIENTS BY EMS PROVIDERS DURING COVID-19



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[Listen to an Ansell-sponsored webinar that covers these planning considerations in greater detail: *First Responders: Answering The Call During The COVID-19 Pandemic.*](#)

Emergency medical services (EMS) and other first responders play a vital role in providing transport and emergency medical treatment for patients in serious or life-threatening conditions. However, the setting presents incredible challenges due to enclosed space during transport, frequent need for rapid medical decision-making, patient interventions with limited information, and a varying range of patient acuity¹. Therefore, implementation of prudent infection control precautions and wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) is essential to avoid or reduce infectious exposures. The following are recommended precaution guidelines summarized below for emergency medical service providers^{1, 2, 3}. These considerations will help formulate strategies for emergency medical service providers and/or could identify potential gaps in a current strategy to resolve.

Personal Protective Equipment Summary Guide - based on suspected level of necessary precautions

EMS Responder	Standard Precautions	Contact Precautions	Droplet Precautions	Airborne Precautions	COVID-19 Precautions
Entering scene and during transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand hygiene Gloves Clothing Masks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand hygiene Gloves Gowns/protective clothing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand hygiene Gloves Masks Eye protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand hygiene Gloves N-95 respirator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand hygiene Gloves Gowns/protective clothing N-95 respirator Face shield or goggles with side protectors
Added precautions	Risk of blood and body fluid exposure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gowns/protective clothing Masks Face shields 	Risk of respiratory secretion exposure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Masks Face shields 	Risk of infectious particle exposure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mask for patient if tolerated 	Risk of intubation exposure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gowns/protective clothing 	Risk of COVID-19 exposure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mask for driver

Important Tips on Respirators and Glove Protection:

Respirators

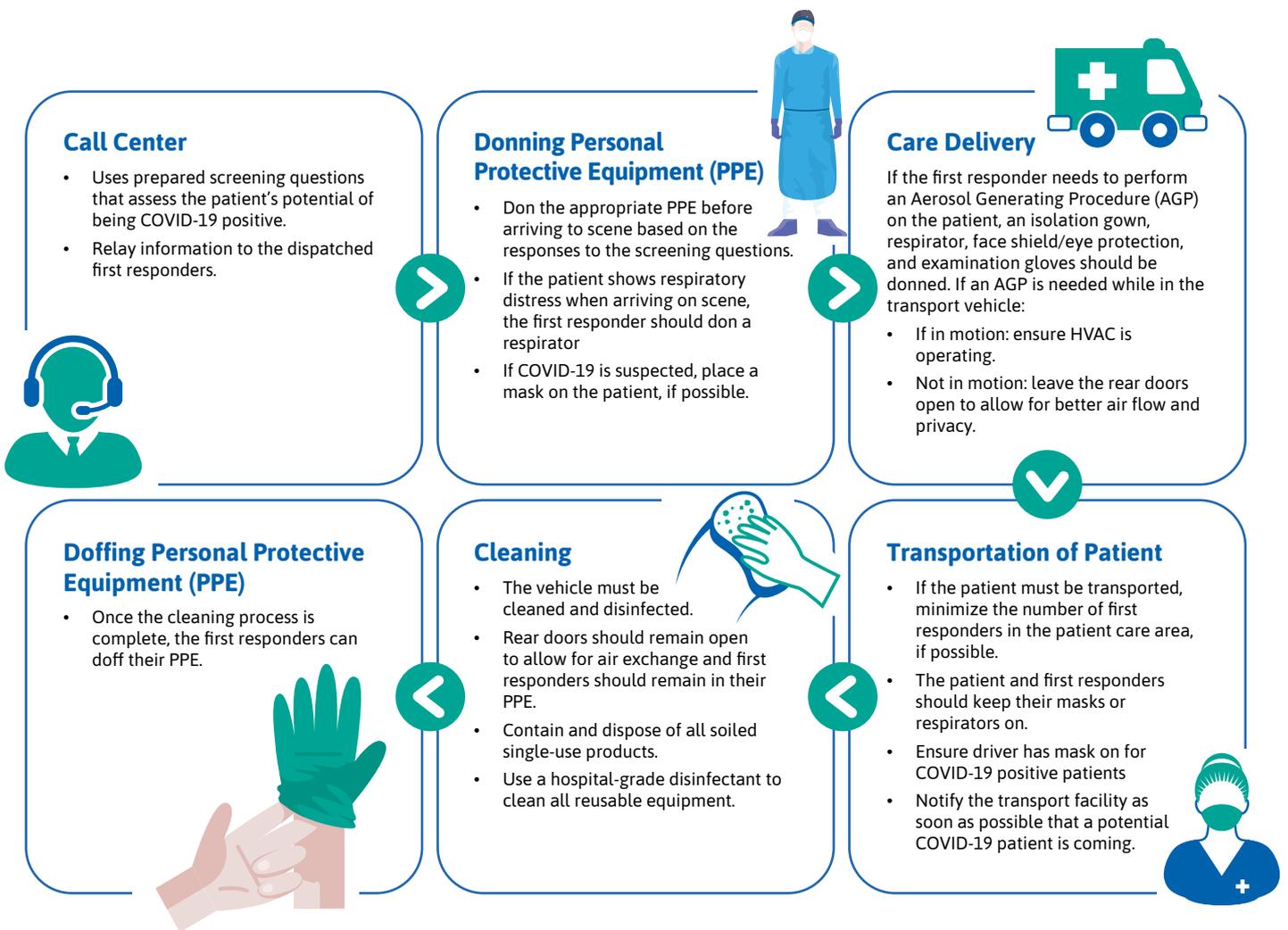
- Respirator masks ensure a high level of protection from airborne diseases, as they seal around the nose and mouth to filter out foreign particles.
- Respirator masks have different names based on the standards for their country or region. The respirator standard mask is the N95 in the US, P2 in Australia and FFP2 in Europe.

Glove Protection

- First responders' exam gloves should meet the standard AQL for their region to minimize the potential for pinhole defects (2.5 or less for the US and 1.5 or less for EU).
- The gloves should also meet ASTM F1671 and EN ISO 374-5 VIRUS guidelines for viral penetration and EN 455 standards for medical exam gloves.

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When an EMS call is placed, there are many personnel and steps in the entire process to consider, especially when dealing with COVID-19. The visual below describes each phase of a call and what providers should consider for providing safe care to patients while maintaining optimal personal protection. However, one should always follow organizational policies and guidelines.



References

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2020). Interim Guidance for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Systems and 911 Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) for COVID-19 in the United States. Accessed at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-for-ems.html> on September 11, 2020.
2. EMS Infectious Disease Playbook. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response. June, 2017. <https://www.ems.gov/pdf/ASPR-EMS-Infectious-Disease-Playbook-June-2017.pdf>. Accessed September 11, 2020.
3. CDC Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>. Accessed September 11, 2020.

➔ For more information on infection prevention and control of COVID-19, please visit: www.ansell.com/us/en/the-new-coronavirus

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