

**San Joaquin County  
Emergency Medical Services Agency**

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**BLS Altered Mental Status**

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**AUTHORITY:** Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Sections 1797.60, 1797.80, 1797.197, 1797.197a, 1797.204, 1797.220, 1798; California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Chapter 2, Sections 100062, 100063, 100064

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**INFORMATION NEEDED:**

Surroundings: syringes, blood glucose monitoring supplies, insulin.

Change in mental status: baseline status, onset and progression of altered state, symptoms prior to altered state such as headache, seizures, confusion, and trauma.

Medical History: diabetes, epilepsy, substance abuse, mental health, medications, and allergies.

Consider Stroke.

Consider Overdose/Intoxication.

**OBJECTIVE FINDINGS:**

Level of consciousness (AVPU) and neurological assessment.

Signs of trauma.

Breath odor.

Pupil size and reactivity.

Needle tracks.

Medical information tags, bracelets or medallions.

**TREATMENT:**

1. Reassure patient and place in position of comfort or supine if hypotensive.
2. Primary Survey – ensure ABC's.
3. Ensure ALS Response.
4. Monitor SpO<sub>2</sub>.
5. Administer oxygen for shortness of breath or signs of hypoxia: Oxygen 10-15 L/min via non-rebreathing mask. Patients with ineffective respirations: support ventilations with BVM and airway.
6. Suction as needed.
7. Secondary Survey and Routine Medical Care.
8. Enhanced Skills EMT: Obtain blood glucose determination.
9. For patients with signs and symptoms of hypoglycemia or a blood glucose value of less than 70 mg/dl: administer 1 tube of **Oral Glucose Gel**.

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Supersedes: July 1, 2007

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Medical Director

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EMS Administrator

- A. For obtunded patients:
  - i. Place patient in semi-prone position.
  - ii. Apply small amount of glucose gel onto the end of a tongue depressor. Repeat as needed.
  - iii. Spread glucose gel on the inside of the lower cheek (buccal area).
  - iv. Promote maximal absorption of glucose product by massaging the outer lower cheek.
  - v. Suction as necessary.
- 10. For patients experiencing a behavioral emergency: treat patient in a calm and reassuring manner using padded or soft leather restraints as necessary only to prevent patient from harming self or others, refer to EMS Policy No. 5107, Use of Patient Restraints.

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