



A DIVISION OF
HEALTH CARE SERVICES
AGENCY

San Joaquin County Emergency Medical Services Agency



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DATE: April 26, 2019

TO: Prehospital Personnel
Prehospital Service Providers
Emergency Departments

FROM: Katherine A. Shafer, M.D., EMS Medical Director

SUBJ.: Treatment of Stroke Patients with RACE scores greater than or equal to 5.

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide ALS personnel with guidance for establishing Intravenous access (IV) on suspected stroke patients that have a RACE score greater than or equal to 5.

Background:

Patients that have a RACE score greater than or equal to 5 are significantly more likely to have a large vessel occlusion (LVO). A definitive diagnosis of an LVO requires a Computed Tomography Angiography (CTA), which relies upon the administration of a special dye (contrast medium) via an IV size 18-20 gauge located in or proximal to the Antecubital (AC) vein.

Prehospital recognition of potential LVO patients using the RACE scale and the prehospital initiation of IV access when a patient's RACE score is greater than or equal to 5 may expedite CTA imaging and care for patients needing Endovascular Therapy (Thrombectomy).

Guidance:

ALS personnel should consider initiating an IV size 18-20 gauge to keep the vein open (TKO) in or proximal to the AC vein, if such action can be performed without delaying transport to a primary stroke center (PSC). ALS personnel should take precautions to avoid repeated IV attempts as many stroke patients may subsequently receive anticoagulation therapy.

If you have questions about the treatment of acute stroke patients or this memorandum, you may contact Jeff Costa by email at jcosta@sjgov.org.