

## 3.03 NEAR DROWNING

### EM SAC FEBRUARY 2026

<b>General Assessment</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Obtain history regarding circumstances leading to the submersion, details of mechanism of injury, time underwater</li><li>Consider medical reasons for drowning (e.g. seizure etc.)</li><li>Consider c-spine injury or other associated traumatic injuries</li><li>Consider and treat hypothermia (Protocol 3.06)</li></ul>	
<b>BLS Management</b> <del>Treatment</del>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Primary survey should include aggressive airway management. Unlike standard cardiac arrest, prompt airway management and supplemental breathing are a priority</li><li>Monitor O<sub>2</sub> saturation. <b>Oxygen</b> as indicated</li><li>Position of comfort</li><li>NPO</li></ul>	
<b>ALS Management</b> <del>Treatment</del>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Advanced airway intervention, as necessary</li><li>Monitor EtCO<sub>2</sub></li><li>Consider CPAP for moderate to severe respiratory distress</li><li>Cardiac monitor</li><li>IV or IO of <b>Normal Saline</b> TKO.</li></ul>	
<b>Comments</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><del>Rapid transport. Patient can deteriorate rapidly.</del></li><li><del>Description (salt or fresh water) and temperature of submersion fluid.</del></li><li><del>If suspected drowning is witnessed for &gt; 30 minutes <b>AND patient is not suspected to be hypothermic</b>, consider withholding resuscitation efforts (Policy 4050)</del></li></ul>	
<del>Duration of submersion.</del>	
<del>Height of fall/mechanism of injury.</del>	
<del>Suspicion of alcohol or other drugs/medications involved.</del>	
<del>Evidence of head/spinal trauma or other associated injuries.</del>	
<del>Neurologic status.</del>	
<del>Respiratory findings: rales or signs of pulmonary edema, respiratory distress.</del>	
<b>Contact Base Hospital Criteria</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><del>To withhold or discontinue cease resuscitation efforts in patients with suspected drowning &lt;30 minutes submersion of &gt; 25 minutes or no response to treatment.</del></li></ul>	