

2.04 CARDIAC ARREST

EMSAC JULY 2025

ALL Cardiac Arrests – High Performance CPR

See Appendix 2 for High Performance Team Organization.

See **Protocol 2.19 Left Ventricular Assist Device (LVAD)** for patients with device.

Current Advanced Cardiac Life Support should be followed in conjunction with this protocol/algorithm

Start CAB (compressions, airway, breathing) when patient is unconscious/unresponsive, not breathing normally and no pulse is detected within 10 seconds.

Compressions

Do 5 cycles of chest compressions at 30:2 compression/ventilation ratio:

- Push hard (at least 2") and fast (100-120/min).
- Allow complete chest recoil.
- Minimize compression interruptions.
- Next up team compressor is continuously checking quality of femoral pulse and is ready to rotate to the compressor position at the end of the cardiac cycle (2 minutes).
- Rotate compressors every 2 minutes or sooner if fatigued.
- If transported with compressions ongoing and LUCAS device is employed (and no evidence of spinal trauma) elevate head of gurney 30 degrees.

AED/Defibrillator

- While CPR is in progress, turn on AED/defibrillator and apply pads (anterior posterior if possible) and pucker.
- Shock on a 2-minute cycle. Pre-charge AED/Defibrillator at 1:45 to get ready to deliver shock at 2 minutes.
- Minimize perishock pause to less than 5 seconds.
- Change out rescuer on chest compressions during perishock pause.
- After first 30 compressions, analyze rhythm. Clear patient and shock if indicated. Resume compressions for another 2 minutes before next rhythm analysis.
- Always resume chest compressions immediately after rhythm analysis or shock.
- **EXCEPTION:** If patient goes into VF/pulseless VT while monitored or attached to an AED or defibrillator, a shock must be administered immediately.
- If no shock advised, resume compressions for another 2 minutes before next rhythm analysis/femoral pulse check.
- If a shockable rhythm continues past the third shock, attach a second set of

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2.04 CARDIAC ARREST

EMSAC JULY 2025

defibrillator pads in a chest position to provide alternate vector defibrillation and switch vectors, or attach a second defibrillator with a second set of defibrillator pads as soon as one is available to provide alternate vector defibrillation.

Airway/Ventilation:

- Open airway. Provide bag-mask ventilation. Pause compressions 2 seconds or less to ventilate during 30:2.
- Ventilate enough to cause chest rise. Avoid excessive ventilation (too fast or too much volume).
- Inserts airway adjuncts as appropriate. Do NOT stop chest compressions during advanced airway insertions.
- Asynchronous ventilations every 6 seconds once advanced airway is in place or every 10th compression

IV/IO Medications:

- ALS provider obtains IV/IO access and gives medications as appropriate.

2.04 CARDIAC ARREST

EMSAC JULY 2025

TREAT REVERSIBLE CAUSES	
1. Hypoxia	1. Tension Pneumothorax
2. Hydrogen Ion (Acidosis)	2. Torsades
3. Hypovolemia	3. Toxins
4. Hypothermia	4. Tamponade (cardiac)
5. Hypo/Hyperkalemia and Hypoglycemia	5. Thrombosis, pulmonary or cardiac

In addition to ongoing ACLS, consider additional treatments:

Hypoxia: Bag-mask ventilation with O2. Insert airway adjuncts as appropriate. Target O2 saturation 94 – 95%.

Hydrogen Ion (Acidosis): Assure adequate ventilation to blow off CO2.

Hypovolemia: Give **Normal Saline** bolus. If secondary to blood loss, early transport

Hypothermia: Rewarm if patient is hypothermic.

Hyperkalemia: Give **Calcium Chloride**

- Consider **Sodium Bicarbonate** only after Calcium Chloride when treating suspected hyperkalemia
- Consider **Albuterol** via BVM

Hypokalemia: Consider early transport

Hypoglycemia: Check blood glucose and correct hypoglycemia per **Protocol 2.03 Altered Mental Status**

Tension Pneumothorax: Relieve tension pneumothorax per **Protocol 7.06 Needle Thoracostomy**

Torsades de Pointes: After defibrillation give **Magnesium Sulfate**

Toxins: Treat signs and symptoms of drug toxicity:

- If QRS widening from Tricyclic Antidepressant Overdose, give **Sodium Bicarbonate**. May repeat.
- If calcium channel blocker overdose, give **Calcium Chloride**. May repeat in 10 min.
- ~~If opiate overdose is suspected, give~~ Consider **Naloxone** for suspected opioid overdose

Tamponade (cardiac) or Thrombosis, pulmonary or cardiac: Consider early transport

2.04 CARDIAC ARREST

EMSAC JULY 2025

CARDIAC ARREST IN PREGNANCY

- Anticipate difficult airway; experienced provider preferred.
- **Normal Saline** fluid bolus. Reassess and repeat as indicated.
- During CPR, have a provider manually displace gravid uterus to patient's left side. If ROSC is achieved, place patient in Left Lateral Decubitus Position.
- If patient is receiving IV/IO **Magnesium** pre-arrest, stop infusion and switch to **Normal Saline**. Flush line with **Normal Saline** prior to giving **Calcium Chloride**. May repeat in 10 min.
- Focus on early transport where possible.

AFTER CARE IF ROSC

- Go to **Protocol 2.05 Adult Post-Cardiac Arrest or Return of Spontaneous Circulation**

AFTER CARE IF NO ROSC

- Provide grief support and referrals for on-site survivors as needed.

DOCUMENTATION

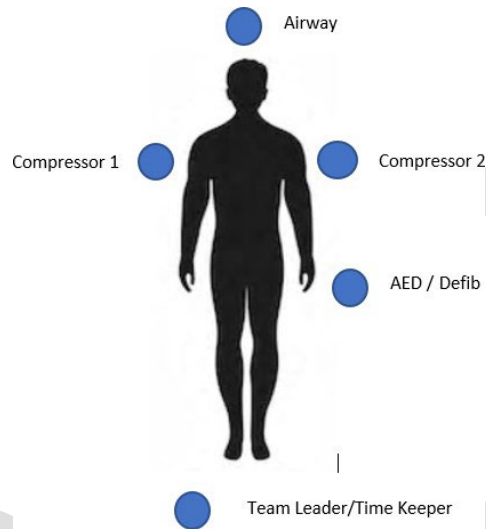
- Initial "At Patient Side" Time.
- Intervention and medication times.
- Use accelerometer ("puck") to track CPR unless LUCAS is being used
- Patient response to interventions and medications (rhythm changes; pulses with and without CPR, ROSC).
- ROSC or termination resuscitation time.
- Bystander CPR prior to arrival and duration if not already a required field

2.04 CARDIAC ARREST

EMSAC JULY 2025

APPENDIX 2: High Performance CPR Team Set Up

Assign functional positions based on available personnel. One person may do one or more of the recommended functional positions listed below:



Compressor:

- Does chest compressions.

Airway:

- Opens airway.
- Provides bag-mask ventilation with O₂. Inserts airway adjuncts as appropriate.
- Target O₂ saturation 94 – 95%.

AED/Monitor/Defibrillator:

- Bring and operates AED/monitor/defibrillator

2.04 CARDIAC ARREST

EMSAC JULY 2025

IV/IO Medications:

- ALS role – gets IV/IO access and gives medications.

Team Leader /Time keeper:

- Assigns team roles (or assumes roles if not assigned).
- Provides team feedback.
- Records intervention and medication times. Announces when next interventions and medications due.
- Records frequency and duration of CPR interruptions.

Next Compressor:

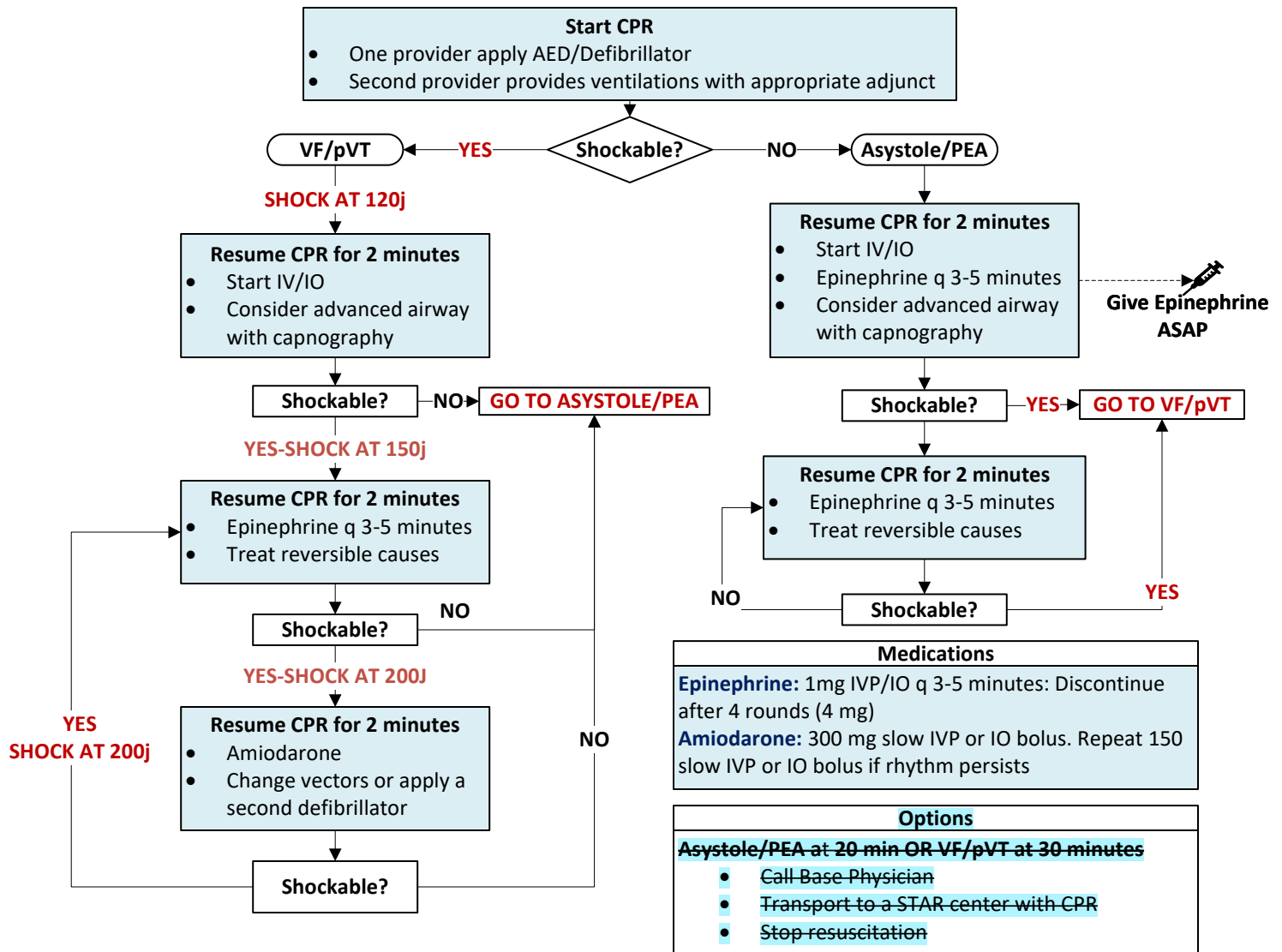
- Continuously checking femoral pulse. Switch at end of cardiac cycle (2 minutes).

Options:-

Asystole/PEA at 20 minutes OR VF/pVT at 30 minutes:

- ~~Call Base Physician~~
- ~~Transport to a STAR center with CPR~~
- ~~Stop Resuscitation~~

- **Start CAB** (compressions, airway, breathing) when patient is unconscious/unresponsive, not breathing normally and no pulse is detected within 10 seconds
- **Compressions:** 5 cycles of chest compressions at 30:2 compression/ventilation ratio. At least 2" deep at 100-120/min. Allow full chest recoil. Next up team compressor continually checking femoral pulse. Rotate compressor q 2min or sooner if fatigued. Apply quantitative waveform. If ETCO₂ is low reassess compression quality.
- **AED/Defibrillation:** Apply AED/Defibrillator (anterior/posterior if possible) during CPR. Pre-charge AED/Defibrillator at 1:45 to deliver shock if applicable. If patient goes into VF/pulseless VT-deliver shock immediately. If shockable rhythm past third shock, attach a second set defibrillator pads to change vectors, or apply an additional defibrillator
- **Airway/Ventilation:** Provide bag-mask ventilation with BLS airway. Minimize compression interruptions. Pause no more than 2 seconds to provide ventilations in 30:2 ratio. Do not stop chest compressions when inserting advanced airways. Asynchronous ventilations q 6 seconds or every 10th compression.
- **IV/IO medications:** ALS provider obtains IV/IO access and gives appropriate medications.



Reversible Causes

In addition to ongoing ACLS, consider additional treatments:

Hypoxia: BVM with O₂-Target SPO₂ to 94-95%

Hydrogen Ion: Adequate ventilation to blow off CO₂

Hypovolemia: Give **Normal Saline** bolus. If secondary to blood loss, early transport

Hypothermia: Rewarm

Hyperkalemia: Give **Calcium Chloride**. Consider **Sodium Bicarbonate** after Calcium Chloride. Consider Albuterol via BVM

Hypokalemia: Consider early transport

Hypoglycemia: Check blood glucose and correct per **Protocol 2.03 Altered Mental Status**

Tension Pneumothorax: Relieve tension per **Protocol 7.06 Needle Thoracostomy**

Torsades: After defibrillation give **Magnesium Sulfate**

Toxins: **Widening QRS from TCA OD:** Give **Sodium Bicarbonate**, may repeat. **Calcium channel OD,** give **Calcium Chloride**, may repeat in 10 minutes. **If Opiate OD is suspected,** give **Consider Naloxone** for suspected opioid overdose

Tamponade (cardiac) or Thrombosis, pulmonary or cardiac: Consider early transport