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CLINICAL CONSIDERATIONS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

<i>General</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The COVID-19 considerations apply to all patients with respiratory symptoms or in cardiac arrest.• Paramedics should screen every patient using the "COVID-19 Screening Tool for Paramedics."• Follow the Infection Prevention and Control practices outlined in the Training Bulletin• Don appropriate PPE as indicated in the Training Bulletin for<ul style="list-style-type: none">• all airway procedures• all cardiac arrests• all patients with respiratory symptoms or hypoxia (SpO₂ < 92%)• all patients who have a positive screen for COVID-19
<i>Airway Management & Ventilation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Withhold CPAP.• Withhold intubation (SGA and ETT) unless the patient is in cardiac arrest.• Withhold suction via an endotracheal or tracheostomy tube unless using a closed system suction catheter.• Withhold manual ventilation in any spontaneously breathing patient unless severe hypoxia (SpO₂ < 85%) is not improving with other therapies.• Administer naloxone for patients with opioid toxicity and inadequate respiration.• Apply an in-line filter as close to the patient as possible when providing manual ventilation.• Pause BVM ventilation to face mask or SGA when transporting a patient through public buildings.
<i>Resuscitation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Withhold chest compressions during advanced airway insertion.• Insert either SGA or oral ETT as soon as possible in cardiac arrest.• When an SGA is used, the gastric/suction port should be occluded prior to insertion.• Use the advanced airway technique with which you are most comfortable.
<i>Oxygen Therapy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use a maximum of 6 L/min oxygen via nasal cannula.• Use a maximum of 15 L/min via non-rebreather mask or BVM.• Preferentially use high concentration/low flow masks with a hydrophobic submicron filter for patients who require high concentration oxygen.
<i>Medication Administration</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Withhold endotracheal medications.• Withhold nebulized medications.• Withhold intra-nasal and buccal medication administration when alternative routes exist.• Use an MDI with spacer for patients without a cough who are in severe respiratory distress due to bronchoconstriction.
<i>Hospital Bypass</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transport STEMI patients with chest pain consistent with myocardial ischemia/myocardial infarction directly to a cardiac centre if they meet all the documented indications and none of the contraindications.

This is a summary. For complete information, see the most recent MAC memo, "Considerations for Paramedics Managing Patients during the COVID-19 Pandemic" and the Ministry of Health Training Bulletin - Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Issue Number 120.