

TRANSPORTING INJURED WORKERS (Additional COVID-19 Controls)

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COVID-19

During the COVID-19 pandemic, occupational first aid attendants continue to provide treatment to workers as necessary. Because of the possibility of infection, companies many need to modify their first aid treatment procedures. This document provides additional precautions to consider adding to your first aid procedures.

Considerations when transporting injured workers

1. The number of employees that may come into contact with the injured employee
2. Types of terrain over which the patient must be transported
3. Location of the patient
4. Distance to the nearest hospital and surface travel time
5. Availability of ETV and first aid equipment or other properly equipped transport vehicle
6. Response time to the worksite by the local ambulance service
7. Maintenance procedures and equipment needs for the ETV or transport vehicle
8. Equipment and personnel requirements to assist with patient transport
9. Special needs for remote worksites i.e. helicopter, fixed wing aircraft, or marine vessels
10. Communication with ambulance dispatch, hospital, or other relevant parties
11. Back-up procedures in case of equipment failure or adverse weather conditions

COVID-19 Health Questions

The first aid attendant should ask these questions in addition to the standard first aid questions before treating any patients. Questions should be asked using physical distancing (2 metres).

1. Do you have any pre-existing health conditions that we should be aware of?
2. Do you have COVID-19 symptoms (fever, new cough, respiratory illness)?
3. Have you been in close contact with anyone you know who is currently symptomatic or has flu like symptoms in the past 14 days?
4. Have you been in close contact with anyone that has just returned from travel outside of British Columbia or Canada?
5. Have you traveled outside of B.C. or Canada in the past 14 days?

If the injured worker answers yes to any of these questions or are unable to answer these questions the person(s) providing first aid services are to assume the injured worker has COVID 19. Additional procedures may be required to ensure the safety of the persons providing first aid services.

First Aid Procedures for Injury – Serious, Minor during COVID-19

When you arrive at the patients location, assess the situation:

- Does the patient have a minor injury that the patient can self-treat while you provide direction and supplies?
- If yes, direct the patient to self-treat per your OFA protocols:
- If no, provide direct patient care (within 2m) with additional controls to limit COVID 19 transmission

Yes - Self-Treatment with direction:

- Visually assess the patient and wound from a distance and ask the patient about underlying conditions relating to the injury.
- The attendant then places the required first aid supplies on a surface 2m from the patient. The attendant then steps back and direct the patient to pick up and apply the supplies. The first aid attendant then verbally conducts a modified secondary survey and documents the findings.
- All contaminated supplies need to be properly bagged and disposed of according to existing first aid blood borne pathogen procedures

No – Providing direct patient care use the appropriate level of PPE for the situation:

- Surgical mask

- Face shield (or safety glasses or goggles)
- Pocket mask with one-way valve and filter
- Gloves
- Coverall (disposable or washable)
- Patients could don a surgical or pocket mask.

If critical interventions are required and there is no way of determining background information, anyone providing close assistance (2m or closer) should wear appropriate PPE. Limit additional employee access to the patient. It is important to limit exposure of others.

CPR and AED procedures

OFFA's should perform compression-only CPR during the COVID-19 pandemic. If there is more than one trained attendant with the required PPE, change places for performing compressions approximately every minute.

CPR - OFA Level 1 and OFA Level 2

Upon approaching the scene, the OFAA conducts a scene assessment and dons the appropriate PPE. Once the PPE is on, the OFFA approaches the patient and applies the appropriate PPE, i.e., face shield on the patient and ensures an open airway. If no air movement is felt the OFAA is to start continuous chest compression at a rate of 100 per minute.

CPR - OFA Level 3

Upon approaching the scene, the OFAA conducts a scene assessment and dons the appropriate PPE. Once the PPE is on, the OFFA approaches the patient and applies the appropriate PPE, i.e., face shield on the patient and ensures an open airway. If no air movement is felt the OFAA is to check for a carotid pulse, and if no pulse is felt, the OFAA is to start continuous chest compression at a rate of 100 per minute.

Assisted Ventilation

If assessment of a patient determines distressed breathing and assisted ventilation is required, the OFAA should use a Bag-Valve mask rather than a pocket mask. Ensure any trained helper(s) don appropriate PPE (surgical mask and face shield) prior to assisting.

AED – Level 1, 2, & 3

While providing compression-only CPR, when and if an AED becomes available stop compressions and prepare the patient's chest, apply AED pads and allow AED to analyze. After no shock/shock advised, give 2 minutes of compression only CPR. Repeat cycles of analyze/shock or no shock and 2 minutes of compression only CPR until medical aid arrives.

OFA level 3 – Employer ETV for transport

The attendant immediately arranges for the ETV to be ready. On approaching the scene, the first aid attendant conducts a scene assessment and dons the appropriate PPE. Once PPE is on, the first aid attendant approaches the patient and applies appropriate PPE (clear face shield), on the patient and ensure an open airway. Once the airway is open and clear, the attendant stabilizes the patient's with an inanimate object and inserts an oropharyngeal airway to protect and maintain the airway. Once completed, the attendant conducts a primary survey to determine what, if any, further critical interventions are required. Only one person (the attendant) needs to be in contact with the patient; all others should stay 2m away.

If the first aid attendant is working alone or if there is no extra PPE on site for helpers, the attendant places the patient in the three-quarter-prone position and packages the patient. Helpers will be needed to assist the first aid attendant in lifting the patient into the basket and ETV. Use whatever PPE or other measures that are available to assist in providing the barrier between these helpers and the patient, including covering the patient with a blanket.

Helpers without PPE should handle the lower extremities and stay as far away from the patient's nose and mouth as much as possible. Once the patient is loaded, the helpers remove their PPE and perform hand hygiene with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

First Aid Kit (additional items for COVID-19 patients)

Additional items to include in first aid kit:

- Thermometer
- Additional antiseptic wipes
- Nitrile gloves
- Hand sanitizer
- Face Shields
- Safety glasses or goggles
- Charcoal inserts for N95 (if using N95 masks), non-surgical masks if N95 are not available
- Sanitizing wipes

Source: WSBC OFAA protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic.