

**SECTION:****GUIDELINE TITLE:** Cardiac arrest management during COVID-19 crisis**REVISED:** 03/2020**OVERVIEW:**

Cardiac arrest can be caused by ventricular fibrillation (VF), pulseless ventricular tachycardia (VT), pulseless electric activity (PEA), and asystole. VF represents disorganized electric activity, whereas pulseless VT represents organized electric activity of the ventricular myocardium. Neither of these rhythms generates significant forward blood flow. PEA encompasses a heterogeneous group of organized electric rhythms that are associated with either absence of mechanical ventricular activity or mechanical ventricular activity that is insufficient to generate a clinically detectable pulse. Asystole (perhaps better described as ventricular asystole) represents absence of detectable ventricular electric activity with or without atrial electric activity. The foundation of successful ACLS is high quality CPR, and, for VF/pulseless VT, attempted defibrillation within minutes of collapse. For victims of witnessed VF arrest, early CPR and rapid defibrillation can significantly increase the chance for survival to hospital discharge.

**Protocol Modifications****Cardiac Arrest**

- 1) Providers not actively engaged in care should maintain a 6 foot distance from the patient's head. Keep equipment 6 ft away or greater until needed.
- 2) For the initial phase of working the arrest, place a nonrebreather mask with high-flow O<sub>2</sub> on the patient, ensure an adequate seal, and place a surgical mask over the exhalation ports of the NRB. This will require close monitoring of the airway for vomiting or pooling secretions.
- 3) If airway management is indicated, it should be performed by the most experienced provider available.
- 4) Utilize the airway that minimizes exposure time and proximity to the provider.  
The order of preference is:
  - a. Supraglottic airway (eg King, iGEL)
  - b. ETT with video laryngoscopy
  - c. ETT with direct laryngoscopy
- 5) If available, place HEPA filter on airway device