

## **Quick Reference Handbook**

# Action card guidance for medical and resuscitation emergencies

To ensure you have the most up to date edition, refer to contents page and RCUK website.

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The guidance in this handbook are not intended to be standards of medical care. The ultimate judgement with regard to a particular clinical procedure or treatment plan must be made by the clinician in light of the clinical data presented, the diagnostic and treatment options available.



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January 2024 (Check current - download the latest updates at www.resus.org.uk)

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### **Updates**

Updated Creative Commons License statement

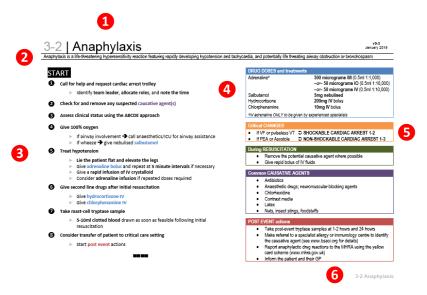
To reflect change in Targeted Temperature Management to Temperature control



### **QRH** instructions for use

The QRH is intended for use by individuals who are familiar with it and who are practised in its use.

Each action card guidance follows the same format:



- 1. Guidance number, name and version number.
- 2. A brief description of the clinical situation for which the guidance is written.
- 3. The body of the guidance
- 4. Call out boxes, which may be referred to in the body text.
  - Orange = critical changes
  - → Blue = drug doses
  - → Green = CPR information
  - → Black = equipment instructions
  - → Purple = other reference information
  - → Red = post-resuscitation care
- 5. A guidance may suggest changing to one of the other action cards, like this:  $\rightarrow$  2-1
- 6. The guidance number is repeated for easy finding without the need for a tabbed folder.

#### Each guidance should be used in the same simple way.

- → Start at START.
- → Work through the numbered bullet points in order.
- → Where indicated, refer to the call out boxes on the right.
- → Where indicated, move to another action card.

#### We recommend:

- One person should read the guidance aloud; they should NOT be the person performing the actions.
- The reader should ensure that the guidance is followed systematically, thoroughly and completely and that steps are not omitted.
- → Whenever experienced help arrives, consider delegating leadership to them; they have a fresh pair of eyes and may be able to make a more clear-headed assessment.





## 1-1 | Cardiac arrest management prior to team arrival

**v0-6** March 2022

Cardiac arrest: the patient is unresponsive, is not breathing normally.

## **START**

- 1 Confirm cardiac arrest and start chest compressions
- 2 Call for help and request resuscitation trolley
  - Check that resuscitation team has been called
  - Call for patient notes, drug charts, and observation charts
- 3 Apply defibrillator pads as soon as possible
  - Apply self-adhesive electrode pads
  - ▶ Minimise interruptions to chest compressions
- 4 Maintain airway and ventilation
  - ► Give **100% oxygen** using bag-valve-mask ventilation
  - Apply waveform capnography monitoring to airway when available
- 5 Check rhythm when defibrillator is connected
  - Check if rhythm shockable if trained to do so.
    - ► If shockable → GUIDANCE 1-2
    - If non-shockable → GUIDANCE 1-3
    - If using an AED follow its prompts
    - continue to 6
- 6 Start CPR again as soon as rhythm check complete
  - ► Check for signs of life after every 2 minutes
- Prepare structured handover to emergency team when they arrive

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#### **Critical CHANGES**

- If VF or pulseless VT **⇒ SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-2**
- If PEA or asystole NON-SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-3
- If pregnant woman OBSTETRIC CARDIAC ARREST 1-5

#### **During RESUSCITATION**

- If you are by yourself and no help has arrived, leave the patient to summon help and collect the resuscitation equipment. Return to patient as soon as possible to commence CPR
- Correct CPR technique:
  - Place the heel of one hand in the centre of the chest with the other hand on top and interlock your fingers
  - Keep arms straight and position shoulders vertically over patient
  - Compress to 5-6 cm allowing the chest to recoil afterwards
  - Repeat at a rate of 100-120 min<sup>-1</sup>
  - Continue CPR 30:2
  - Consider inserting supraglottic airway if trained to do so

#### **Structured HANDOVER**

- Situation
- Background
- Assessment
- Recommendation(s)
- Decision

#### **CONTACT NUMBERS**

- Resuscitation team:
  - In-hospital:

2222

• Out-of-hospital:

999

- Other useful numbers:
  - •
  - •
  - •





## 1-2 | Shockable cardiac arrest (VF/pVT)

**v0-10** August 2023

VF or VT on ECG with no pulse or signs of life. The key treatment is early defibrillation.

## **START**

- 1 Confirm cardiac arrest and start CPR
- 2 Call for help and request resuscitation trolley
  - ldentify team leader, allocate roles, and note the time
- 3 Apply defibrillation pads
- 4 Check rhythm and pulse:
  - ▶ If shockable → go to step ⑤
  - If non-shockable → GUIDANCE 1-3
  - ► If return of spontaneous circulation → post-resuscitation care
  - Change compressions-provider during check if possible
- **5** Deliver safe shock:
  - Select shock energy and charge defibrillator
  - Give chest compression whilst charging
  - ► **Stop** compressions to deliver shock
  - Start 2 minutes of compressions immediately after delivery
- 6 Check if drug treatment is needed
  - ▶ Give adrenaline after shock 3 then repeat every 3-5 minutes
  - ► Give amiodarone after shocks 3 and 5 only
- Maintain airway and ventilation
  - ► Give 100% oxygen using bag-valve-mask ventilation
  - Insert supraglottic airway –or– tracheal tube if trained to do so
  - Apply waveform capnography monitoring to airway
- 8 Check for and treat reversible causes
- 9 After 2 minutes → go to step 4

#### **DRUG DOSES and treatments**

Adrenaline 1 mg IV / IO

Amiodarone 300 mg IV / IO after 3rd shock -then-

150 mg IV / IO after 5th shock

#### **Critical CHANGES**

- If PEA or asystole 

  NON-SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-3
- If pregnant woman 

  □ OBSTETRIC CARDIAC ARREST 1-5
- If K<sup>+</sup> > 6.5 mmol L<sup>-1</sup> ⇒ SEVERE HYPERKALAEMIA 3-5

#### **During RESUSCITATION**

- 30 compressions to 2 rescue breaths,100-120 min<sup>-1</sup>, depth 5-6 cm
- Continuous compressions once airway secured

#### Shock energy

- Defibrillation energy in this trust:
- If unsure about shock energy, use maximum available

#### **REVERSIBLE CAUSES**

- Hypoxia
- Hypovolaemia
- Hypo/hyperkalaemia & metabolic
- Hypothermia

- Tamponade cardiac\*
- Toxins
- Thrombosis coronary or pulmonary\*
- Tension pneumothorax\*
  - \*Ultrasound may assist detection

#### POST-RESUSCITATION CARE

- Check ABCDE, ECG, CXR, and ABG
- Aim for SpO<sub>2</sub> 94-98%, normal PaCO<sub>2</sub>
- Temperature control
- Treat precipitating cause
- Consider transfer of patient to critical care setting





## 1-3 | Non-shockable cardiac arrest (PEA or asystole)

**v0-12** August 2023

Asystole or PEA on ECG with no pulse or signs of life. The key treatment is early CPR.

## **START**

- 1 Confirm cardiac arrest and start CPR
- 2 Call for help and request resuscitation trolley
  - ldentify team leader, allocate roles, and note the time
- 3 Apply defibrillation pads
- 4 Check rhythm and pulse:
  - ▶ If non-shockable → go to step 5
  - If shockable → GUIDANCE 1-2
  - ► If return of spontaneous circulation → post-resuscitation care
  - Change compressions-provider during check if possible
- 5 Start 2 minutes of CPR
  - ► Give adrenaline then repeat every **3-5 min**
- 6 Maintain airway and ventilation
  - ► Give **100% oxygen** using bag-valve-mask ventilation
  - ▶ Insert supraglottic airway –or– tracheal tube if trained to do so
  - Apply waveform capnography monitoring to airway
- 7 Check for and treat reversible causes
- 8 After 2 minutes → go to step 4



#### **DRUG DOSES and treatments**

Adrenaline

1 mg IV / IO bolus

If invasively monitored and severe refractory hypotension give 50 microgram increments of adrenaline titrated to effect

#### **Critical CHANGES**

- If VF or pulseless VT⊃ SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-2
- If pregnant woman OBSTETRIC CARDIAC ARREST 1-5
- If K<sup>+</sup> > 6.5 mmol L<sup>-1</sup> ⇒ SEVERE HYPERKALAEMIA 3-5
- If severe bleeding 

  MASSIVE HAEMORRHAGE 3-6

#### **During RESUSCITATION**

- 30 compressions to 2 rescue breaths, 100-120 min<sup>-1</sup>, depth 5-6 cm
- · Continuous compressions once airway secured
- Insert vascular access (intravenous or intraosseous)
- Check for reversible causes 

   ASSESSMENT OF
   REVERSIBLE CAUSES DURING CARDIAC ARREST 1-4

#### **REVERSIBLE CAUSES**

- Hypoxia
- Hypovolaemia
- Hypo/hyperkalaemia & metabolic
- Hypothermia

- Tamponade cardiac\*
- Toxins
- Thrombosis coronary or pulmonary\*
- Tension pneumothorax\*\*Ultrasound may assist detection

#### POST-RESUSCITATION CARE

- Check ABCDE, ECG, CXR, and ABG
- Aim for SpO<sub>2</sub> 94-98%, normal PaCO<sub>2</sub>
- Temperature control
- Treat precipitating cause
- · Consider transfer of patient to critical care setting





## Assessment of reversible causes during cardiac arrest

**v0-9** Mar 2022

Triggers of cardiac arrest for which specific treatments exist and must be considered during any cardiac arrest

## START

- **1** Check for hypoxaemia (PaO₂ < 10 kPa)
  - Give 100% oxygen using bag-valve-mask –and– check device correctly connected
  - ▶ Insert **supraglottic airway** *-or* **tracheal tube** if trained to do so
  - Check chest movement and air entry
- Check for hypovolaemia
  - Check for haemorrhage, occult bleeding, or fluid loss
- 3 Check for hypo/hyperkalaemia and electrolyte abnormalities
  - Check potassium, calcium, and glucose on ABG
  - Check serum magnesium
- 4 Check for hypothermia
  - Check using low reading thermometer if necessary
- 5 Check for thrombosis (pulmonary or coronary)
  - Check for signs of DVT or relevant prior history
  - Consider focused cardiac ultrasound
- 6 Check for tamponade (cardiac)
  - Consider focused cardiac ultrasound
- Check for tension pneumothorax
  - Check bilateral air entry, chest movement, and airway pressure
  - Check for tracheal deviation
  - Consider focused chest ultrasound
- 8 Check for toxins
  - Check drug chart and clinical notes

#### **DRUG DOSES and treatments**

#### **CARDIAC ARREST treatment**

Potassium chloride 20 mmol IV over 10 min -then-

10 mmol IV over 5-10 min

Magnesium sulfate 50% 2 g IV over 1-2 min

Tenecteplase 500-600 micrograms kg<sup>-1</sup> IV bolus –*or*–
Alteplase 50 mg IV bolus –*then*– if still in cardiac arrest

**50 mg IV** bolus after 30 minutes

#### **Critical CHANGES**

- If VF or pulseless VT⊃ SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-2
- If PEA or asystole ⊃ NON-SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-3
- If K<sup>+</sup> > 6.5 mmol L<sup>-1</sup> ⇒ SEVERE HYPERKALAEMIA 3-5
- If severe bleeding MASSIVE HAEMORRHAGE 3-6

#### **During RESUSCITATION**

- Give IV/IO fluids or blood as required
- If serum potassium < 3.5mmol L<sup>-1</sup> → give potassium chloride
- If serum magnesium < 0.65mmol L<sup>-1</sup> → give magnesium sulfate 50%
- If hypothermia → start active warming and warmed fluids
- If cardiac event → consider thrombolysis during resuscitation
- If PE → consider fibrinolytic drugs (e.g. alteplase)
- If toxins → check for relevant reversal agents

#### Other reference information

- Use waveform capnography if advanced airway inserted
- For prolonged resuscitation consider mechanical chest compression device if available
- Consider extracorporeal CPR (ECPR) if available
- Consider dialysis if available







GUIDELINES / 2021

**v1-1**August 2021

1-5 | Obstetric cardiac arrest

Alterations in maternal physiology and exacerbations of pregnancy related pathologies must be considered. Priorities include calling the appropriate team members, relieving aortocaval compression, effective cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), consideration of causes and performing a timely emergency hysterotomy (perimortem caesarean section) when ≥ 20 weeks.

#### START

- Confirm cardiac arrest and call for help. Declare 'Obstetric cardiac arrest'
  - ► Team for mother and team for neonate if > 20 weeks
- 2 Lie flat, apply manual uterine displacement to the left
  - ▶ Or left lateral tilt (from head to toe at an angle of 15–30° on a firm surface)
- 3 Commence CPR and request resuscitation trolley
  - Standard CPR ratios and hand position apply
  - Evaluate potential causes (Box A)
- Identify team leader, allocate roles including scribe
  - Note time
- Apply defibrillation pads and check cardiac rhythm (defibrillation is safe in pregnancy and no changes to standard shock energies are required)
  - if VF/pulseless VT → defibrillation and first adrenaline and amiodarone after 3rd shock
  - ► If PEA/asystole → resume CPR and give first adrenaline immediately
  - Check rhythm and pulse every 2 minutes
  - Repeat adrenaline every 3-5 minutes
- 6 Maintain airway and ventilation
  - ► Give 100% oxygen using bag-valve-mask device
  - Insert supraglottic airway with drain port —or— tracheal tube if trained to do so (intubation may be difficult, and airway pressures may be higher)
  - Apply waveform capnography monitoring to airway
  - ► If expired CO₂ is absent, presume oesophageal intubation until absolutely excluded
- 7 Circulation
  - ▶ I.V. access above the diaphragm, if fails or impossible use upper limb intraosseous (IO)
  - See Box B for reminders about drugs
  - Consider extracorporeal CPR (ECPR) if available
- 8 Emergency hysterotomy (perimortem caesarean section)
  - Perform if ≥ 20 weeks gestation, to improve maternal outcome
  - Perform immediately if maternal fatal injuries or prolonged pre-hospital arrest
  - ▶ Perform by 5 minutes if no return of spontaneous circulation
- Post resuscitation from haemorrhage activate Massive Haemorrhage Protocol Consider uterotonic drugs, fibrinogen and tranexamic acid Uterine tamponage/sutures, aortic compression, hysterectomy

Box A. BOTENTIAL	CALISES Allia and ATia (annotific to abotatrica)
	CAUSES 4H's and 4T's (specific to obstetrics)
Hypoxia	Respiratory – Pulmonary embolus (PE),
	Failed intubation, aspiration
	Heart failure
	Anaphylaxis
	Eclampsia / PET – pulmonary oedema, seizure
Hypovolaemia	Haemorrhage – obstetric (remember concealed),
	abnormal placentation, uterine rupture, atony,
	splenic artery/hepatic rupture, aneurysm rupture
	Cardiac – arrhythmia, myocardial infarction (MI)
	Distributive – sepsis, high regional block,
	anaphylaxis
Hypo/hyperkalaemia	Also consider blood sugar, sodium, calcium and
,, ,,	magnesium levels
Hypothermia	
Tamponade	Aortic dissection, peripartum cardiomyopathy,
'	trauma
Thrombosis	Amniotic fluid embolus, PE, MI, air embolism
Toxins	Local anaesthetic, magnesium, illicit drugs
Tension pneumothorax	Entonox in pre-existing pneumothorax, trauma

Box B: IV DRUGS F	FOR USE DURING CARDIAC ARREST
Fluids	500 mL IV crystalloid bolus
Adrenaline	<b>1 mg IV</b> every 3-5 minutes in non-shockable or after 3rd shock
Amiodarone	300 mg IV after 3rd shock
Atropine	0.5-1 mg IV up to 3 mg if vagal tone likely cause
Calcium chloride	<b>10% 10 mL</b> IV for Mg overdose, low calcium or hyperkalaemia
Magnesium	<ul><li>2 g IV for polymorphic VT / hypomagnesaemia,</li><li>4 g IV for eclampsia</li></ul>
Thrombolysis/PCI	For suspected massive pulmonary embolus / MI
Tranexamic acid	<b>1 g</b> if haemorrhage
Intralipid	1.5 mL kg <sup>-1</sup> IV bolus and 15 mL kg <sup>-1</sup> hr <sup>-1</sup> IV infusion





## 2-1 | Bradycardia

**v0-5** October 2021

An abnormally slow heart rate causing haemodynamic compromise. Heart rates under 40 min<sup>-1</sup> are often tolerated poorly, especially in patients with heart disease.

### **START**

- 1 Call for help and request resuscitation trolley
  - Request defibrillator with pacing module
  - ► Attach ECG leads and defibrillator pads
- 2 Give oxygen
  - Apply oxygen at 15 L min<sup>-1</sup> via reservoir mask initially
  - ► Titrate to SpO<sub>2</sub> 94-98% when monitoring available
- 3 Perform ABCDE assessment and check for life threatening features
  - Check 12-lead ECG for rhythm and signs of ischaemia
  - Check serum electrolytes and drug history
- 4 Give atropine boluses to total dose of 3 mg
  - If bradycardia secondary to beta-blocker or calcium channel blocker → give glucagon
  - ▶ If bradycardia secondary to digoxin → call expert help
- 5 Consider risk of deterioration
  - ► If risk of asystole → prepare pacing
  - ▶ If poor response to atropine → prepare pacing
  - ► If pacing required but unavailable → consider adrenaline –or–isoprenaline –or–dopamine
- 6 If pacing required
  - ► Call anaesthetic/ICU for support with sedation
  - Apply defibrillator pads and 3-lead monitoring in conventional positions (consider antero-posterior pad position if implanted device or trauma)
  - Start pacing and assess response clinically
  - After electrical capture set pacer output to 10 mA above capture point
  - Check pulse and blood pressure
- 7 Call for expert help to assess need for trans-venous pacing

#### **DRUG DOSES and treatments**

Atropine\* 500 micrograms IV bolus

Adrenaline
2-10 micrograms min<sup>-1</sup> IV infusion
5 micrograms min<sup>-1</sup> IV infusion

Dopamine 2.5-10 micrograms kg<sup>-1</sup> min<sup>-1</sup> IV infusion

Glucagon 2-10 mg IV in glucose 5% –then– 50 micrograms kg<sup>-1</sup> h<sup>-1</sup> IV infusion

\*do NOT give atropine to patients with a transplanted heart

#### **Critical CHANGES**

- If VF or pulseless VT⊃ SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-2
- If PEA or asystole **⊃ NON-SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-3**

#### Relevant LIFE THREATENING FEATURES

- Signs of cardiac ischaemia
- Cardiac failure

Syncope

Shock

#### Factors increasing RISK OF ASYSTOLE

- Recent asystole
- Mobitz II AV block
- Complete heart block with broad QRS complexes
- Ventricular pauses greater than 3 seconds

#### **Pacing TARGETS**

- Set pacer rate to 60-90 min<sup>-1</sup>
- Increase pacer output until capture (often 50-100 mA)
- If reach maximum output without capture, change pad position
- Demand mode unless significant motion artefact
- It is safe for staff to touch patients receiving transcutaneous pacing





## 2-2 | Compromised tachycardia

v0-5 December 2022

Tachyarrhythmia causing haemodynamic compromise. Synchronised cardioversion is the mainstay of treatment.

## **START**

- 1 Call for help and request resuscitation trolley
  - ▶ Start ABCDE assessment to confirm life threatening features
  - Attach ECG leads and defibrillator pads
  - Check 12-lead ECG
  - Check history and drug chart for causes of tachycardia
  - Check serum electrolytes and take sample for blood gas analysis
- 2 If conscious → give sedation
  - Call anaesthetics/ICU for assistance
  - Sedative drug doses likely to be lower than usual, and slower in onset
  - Consider fasting state when planning sedation
- 3 Give up to three synchronised shocks
  - ► Check ECG, heart rate, and blood pressure after each
  - Give oxygen between shocks
  - If no response after three shocks → call expert help -then- give amiodarone bolus -then- give fourth shock -then- give amiodarone infusion



#### **DRUG DOSES and treatments**

Amiodarone bolus

Amiodarone infusion

300 mg IV over 10-20 min

900 mg IV over 24 h via central line

#### **Critical CHANGES**

If VF or pulseless VT The SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-2
If PEA or asystole The Non-SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-3

#### **Relevant LIFE THREATENING FEATURES**

- Signs of cardiac ischaemia
- Cardiac failure

Syncope

Shock

#### **Cardioversion ENERGY**

#### **Broad complex:**

120-150 J initially then increasing incrementally

### Narrow complex or atrial flutter:

• 70-120 J initially then increasing incrementally

#### AF:

 Start at maximum defibrillator energy setting

#### SYNCHRONISED Shock

- Cardioversion requires synchronised shock (unsynchronised risks VF)
- When synchronising, the defibrillator will highlight QRS complexes and display a 'sync' message
- For atrial rhythms use antero-posterior pad position if possible
- When giving shock, keep button pressed until shock delivered
- Check if synchronisation still active after every shock





3-1 Altered consciousness

**v0-7** March 2022

New onset confusion, decrease in GCS of > 2 points or repeated or prolonged seizures

## **START**

- 1 Check Airway
  - ► If evidence of **obstruction** or partial obstruction → call anaesthetics/ICU and apply airway manouevres
  - ▶ If airway unprotected → turn patient to lateral position
- 2 Check Breathing
  - ▶ If breathing inadequate → call anaesthetics/ICU
  - ▶ Apply oxygen at 15 L min<sup>-1</sup> via reservoir mask initially
  - ▶ Titrate to SpO₂ 94-98% when monitoring available
  - if saturations do not improve on oxygen → call for bag-valve-mask -then- support breathing
  - ▶ If respiratory rate < 8 and recent **opioid** use → give naloxone
  - Take ABG
- Check Circulation
  - ► If hypotensive → give crystalloid fluid challenge
- 4 Check Disability using either ACVPU -or- GCS
  - Check pupils for size, equality, and reaction to light
  - ▶ If recent benzodiazepine use → give flumazenil
  - Check blood glucose
    - ► If hypoglycaemia → give dextrose
    - ► If hyperglycaemia → check ketones and start fixed-rate insulin infusion
- **5** Check Exposure
  - Examine patient thoroughly
  - ► Check temperature
- 6 Identify and treat common causes
- 7 Consider CT head scan
- 8 Consider transfer of patient to critical care setting

#### **DRUG DOSES and treatments**

Dextrose 10%\* **50 mL IV** –then– repeat every 60 s until patient

conscious -or- 250 mL total given

Flumazenil<sup>†</sup> [specialist use] **200 micrograms IV** *–then–* 

**100 micrograms** every 60s until patient

conscious -or- 1 mg total given

Fixed rate insulin

infusion\*

soluble insulin 1 unit mL<sup>-1</sup> at 0.1 units kg h<sup>-1</sup>

Glucagon\* **1mg IM** bolus *-then-* 10% dextrose

Naloxone **400 micrograms IV** –*or*–

800 micrograms IM *-or-*800 micrograms SC *-or-*

2 mg intranasal

Initial fluid challenge

No cardiac failure: 500 mL IV crystalloid bolusCardiac failure: 250 mL IV crystalloid bolus

\*check local protocols †give only after expert advice

#### **Critical CHANGES**

- If VF or pulseless VT 
   SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-2
- If PEA or asystole → NON-SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-3
- If infection found SEPSIS 3-8

#### **Common CAUSES**

- Profound hypoxia or hypercapnia
- Profound hypotension
- Hypoglycaemia (blood glucose < 4 mmol L<sup>-1</sup>)
- Cerebral hypoperfusion or head injury
- Recent administration of sedatives or analgesic drugs
- Intracerebral disease





## 3-2a | Anaphylaxis

**v0-8** March 2022

Anaphylaxis is a life-threatening hypersensitivity reaction featuring rapidly developing hypotension and tachycardia, and potentially life-threating airway obstruction or bronchospasm

## **START**

- 1 Call for help and consider requesting resuscitation trolley
  - ldentify team leader, allocate roles, and note the time
- 2 Assess clinical status using the ABCDE approach
  - Check patient position
  - ► If respiratory distress → sit the patient upright
  - ▶ If hypotension → lie the patient flat -and- elevate the legs
  - ► Check airway –and– give oxygen
  - If airway involvement → call anaesthetics/ICU
- 3 Treat anaphylaxis
  - ▶ Give adrenaline –and– repeat at 5 minute intervals if no improvement
  - Give a rapid bolus of IV crystalloid
  - Check for and remove any suspected causative agent(s)
- 4 Check the patient's response
  - ► If no improvement after two doses of IM adrenaline state 'refractory anaphylaxis' –then– go to REFRACTORY ANAPHYLAXIS 3-2b
- 5 Take mast-cell tryptase sample
  - ▶ 5-10 mL clotted blood drawn as soon as feasible following initial resuscitation
- 6 Consider transfer of patient to critical care setting
  - Start post-event actions

#### 

#### **DRUG DOSES and treatments**

Adrenaline bolus\* 500 micrograms IM to anterolateral aspect

of mid-thigh *-or-*

[specialist use] **50 micrograms IO/IV 15 L min**<sup>-1</sup> via **reservoir mask** *-then*-

titrate to SpO<sub>2</sub> 94-98%

\*IM generally preferred; IV/IO adrenaline **ONLY** to be given by experienced specialists

#### **Critical CHANGES**

Oxygen

- If VF or pulseless VT SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-2
- If PEA or asystole 

  NON-SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-3
- If refractory anaphylaxis 
   ⇒ REFRACTORY ANAPHYLAXIS 3-9

#### **During RESUSCITATION**

- Remove the potential causative agent where possible
- Give rapid bolus of IV fluids

#### **Common CAUSATIVE AGENTS**

- Antibiotics
- Anaesthetic drugs; neuromuscular blocking drugs
- Chlorhexidine
- Contrast media
- Nuts, insect stings, foodstuffs

#### **POST-EVENT actions**

- Take second tryptase sample at 1-2 hours, and third after 24 hours
- Consider cetirizine for cutaneous symptoms
- Make referral to a specialist allergy or immunology centre to identify the causative agent (see www.bsaci.org for details)
- Report anaphylactic drug reactions to the MHRA using the yellow card scheme (www.mhra.gov.uk)
- Inform the patient and their GP





## 3-2b | Refractory Anaphylaxis

**v0-3** March 2022

Refractory anaphylaxis exists where the patient shows no improvement in cardiovascular or respiratory symptoms after two appropriate doses of IM adrenaline

### **START**

- 1 Call for anaesthetics/ICU if not already present
- Start continuous monitoring if not already started
  - 3-lead ECG
  - Pulse oximetry
  - Blood pressure on automatic cycle (at least every 5 minutes)
- Start adrenaline infusion
  - ▶ Repeat adrenaline boluses at 5 minute intervals until infusion started
- Check the patient's response
  - If ongoing shock → give rapid bolus(es) of IV crystalloid –and–give steroid treatment
  - ► If severe or persistent wheeze → give nebulised salbutamol –and–give steroid treatment
- **5** Take mast-cell tryptase sample
  - ▶ 5-10 mL clotted blood drawn as soon as feasible following initial resuscitation
- 6 Transfer of patient to critical care setting
  - Start post-event actions



#### **DRUG DOSES and treatments**

Adrenaline bolus\* Adrenaline bolus\* **500 micrograms IM** 

to anterolateral aspect of mid-thigh -or-

[specialist use] 50 micrograms IO / IV

Adrenaline infusion<sup>†</sup> Check local protocol –*or*–

1 mg in 100 mL 0.9% sodium chloride

via **peripheral IV**; start at

0.5-1.0 mL kg<sup>-1</sup> hr<sup>-1</sup>

Salbutamol 5 mg nebulised

Oxygen 15 L min<sup>-1</sup> via reservoir mask –then–

titrate to SpO<sub>2</sub> 94-98%

Crystalloid bolus e.g. **500-1000 mL 0.9% sodium chloride** 

per bolus, titrated to response

Steroid treatment **prednisolone PO** if possible *-or-*

hydrocortisone IV if PO route unavailable

\*IM generally preferred; IV/IO adrenaline **ONLY** to be given by

experienced specialists

†Only for refractory anaphylaxis

#### **Critical CHANGES**

- If VF or pulseless VT SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-2
- If PEA or asystole S NON-SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-3

#### **POST-EVENT actions**

- Take second tryptase sample at 1-2 hours, and third after 24 hours
- Consider cetirizine for cutaneous symptoms
- Make referral to a specialist allergy or immunology centre to identify the causative agent (see www.bsaci.org for details)
- Report anaphylactic drug reactions to the MHRA using the yellow card scheme (www.mhra.gov.uk)
- Inform the patient and their GP



## GUIDELINES /2021

3-3 | Asthma

**v0-5** March 2022

A potentially life-threatening emergency characterised by respiratory distress, wheeze, and hypoxaemia.

## **START**

- 1 Call for help and consider requesting resuscitation trolley
  - ldentify team leader, allocate roles, and note the time
- 2 Check clinical status using the ABCDE approach
  - Check for symmetrical breath sounds and chest movements
  - ► Check respiratory rate, SpO₂, peak expiratory flow rate, and consider ABG
- 3 Give oxygen
  - ▶ Apply oxygen at **15 L min<sup>-1</sup> via reservoir mask** initially
  - ► Titrate to SpO<sub>2</sub> 94-98% when monitoring available
- 4 If severe or life-threatening features → call anaesthetics/ICU urgently
- **5** Start nebulised bronchodilators
  - Give nebulised salbutamol once (continuously if severe or life-threatening)
  - ► Give nebulised ipratropium once
- 6 Start steroid therapy
- Consider IV crystalloid fluid challenge(s)
- 8 Consider IV therapy if limited response to nebulisers
  - Apply cardiac monitoring
  - ► Start IV magnesium
  - Check electrolytes
- If poor response to IV magnesium → call anaesthetics/ICU urgently
  - ► Consider IV salbutamol –or– IV aminophylline only after discussion with senior medical staff –and– where the situation is life-threatening
- Consider transfer of patient to critical care setting
  - ▶ If tracheal intubation required → consider ketamine
  - Airway pressures likely to be high initially

#### **DRUG DOSES and treatments**

Salbutamol 5 mg nebulised via oxygen

250 micrograms IV over 5-10 minutes

Ipratropium bromide
Steroid therapy

500 micrograms nebulised via oxygen
100 mg IV hydrocortisone bolus –or–

40 mg PO prednisolone

Magnesium sulfate 2 g IV over 20 min

Aminophylline [specialist use] 5 mg kg-1 IV over 20 min\*

-then- **0.5-0.7 mg kg**-1 hr-1 IV infusion

\*omit loading dose if taking PO theophylline and monitor levels regularly

#### **Critical CHANGES**

- If VF or pulseless VT SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-2
- If PEA or asystole **NON-SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-3**
- If infection found ⊃ SEPSIS 3-8

#### **During RESUSCITATION**

- Give maximal oxygen therapy; intubation desirable
- Take care to exclude tension pneumothorax and gas trapping
- Extra-corporeal life support may be successful

#### Features of SEVERE asthma

- PEF 33-50% predicted
- Respiratory rate ≥ 25 min<sup>-1</sup>
- Heart rate 110 ≥ min<sup>-1</sup>
- Inability to complete sentence in single breath

#### Features of LIFE-THREATENING/NEAR FATAL asthma

- PEF < 33% predicted
- SpO<sub>2</sub> < 92% or PaO<sub>2</sub> < 8 kPa
- PaCO<sub>2</sub> ≥ 4.6 kPa)
- Silent chest, cyanosis, poor respiratory effort, or exhaustion
- Arrhythmia or hypotension
- Altered conscious level



GUIDELINES

3-4 Choking

**v0-7** March 2022

Foreign body airway obstruction, with an ineffective cough in a patient who is conscious

## **START**

- 1 Call for help and consider requesting resuscitation trolley
  - Position patient upright
- 2 Give up to 5 back blows
- 3 Check if airway remains obstructed
  - Stop if airway cleared
- 4 Give up to 5 abdominal thrusts
- Check if airway remains obstructed
  - ► Stop if airway cleared
- 6 Give 5 back blows and 5 abdominal thrusts alternately
  - Stop if airway cleared
- If patient conscious but no improvement → call anaesthetics –and– ENT
  - Retrieval of foreign body under anaesthesia likely to be required
  - Nasendoscopy may assist localisation of foreign body
  - Prepare for transfer to theatre
    - ► Anaesthetist and surgeon should prepare airway management plan and choice of airway device
    - Give IV dexamethasone
    - Prepare suction and equipment for difficult intubation
    - Maintain spontaneous respiration during induction if possible
    - ▶ Trans-nasal humidified rapid insufflation ventilatory exchange (THRIVE) with device e.g. Optiflow may be helpful if IV induction necessary
    - ► If material below the glottis → prepare for rigid bronchoscopy

#### **DRUG DOSES and treatments**

Oxygen High-flow via bag-mask during cardiac arrest

Dexamethasone 6.6 mg IV bolus

**CARDIAC ARREST treatment** 

Removal of foreign body May require **laryngoscopy** and

Magill forceps\*

\*specific airway training required

#### **Critical CHANGES**

If patient loses consciousness commence CPR:

- If VF or pulseless VT \(\sigma\) SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-2
- If PEA or asystole 

  NON-SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-3

#### **During RESUSCITATION**

- With appropriate skills undertake laryngoscopy and attempt to remove any foreign body with Magill forceps
- Consider early tracheal intubation
- If cardiac arrest due to tracheo-bronchial foreign body, intubation will still provide the best opportunity for oxygenation; push tracheal material into one bronchus to allow one-lung ventilation if necessary
- · Emergency surgical airway may be required

#### **BACK BLOWS**

- Deliver with heel of one hand between the scapulae
- Check between each blow to see if obstruction has been relieved

#### **ABDOMINAL THRUSTS**

- Stand behind patient
- Place a fist under the xiphisternum
- Pull sharply inwards and upwards
- Check between each abdominal thrust to see if obstruction has been relieved





## 3-5 | Severe Hyperkalaemia

**v0-6** March 2022

Serum potassium greater than 6.5 mmol L<sup>-1</sup>, with or without ECG changes. ECG changes may include: flattened/absent P-waves, tall T-waves, broad QRS complexes, ST-segment changes

## **START**

- 1 Call for help and consider requesting resuscitation trolley
  - Identify team leader, allocate roles, and note the time
- 2 Check clinical status using the ABCDE approach
- 3 Apply continuous cardiac monitoring
- 4 Give calcium if ECG changes
  - ► Can be repeated every **10-15 minutes** if ECG changes persist
- **6** Give nebulised salbutamol
- 6 Start insulin/dextrose infusion
  - ▶ Check **serum potassium** and **blood glucose** after treatment
- 7 If hyperkalaemia persists → consider need for emergency dialysis
  - ► Call ICU or renal team if required
- 8 Check for and remove any suspected causative agent(s)
  - ► Check drug chart
  - Check infusions connected to patient



#### **DRUG DOSES and treatments**

Calcium Therapy 10 mL IV 10% calcium chloride over

**2-5 min** –*or*–

30 mL IV 10% calcium gluconate

2-5 min

Insulin/Dextrose infusion 10 units short-acting insulin in 50 mL

50% dextrose (25 g glucose) over 15 min

Salbutamol 10-20 mg nebulised

**CARDIAC ARREST treatment** 

Sodium bicarbonate **50 mmol IV** bolus (50 mL 8.4% solution)

#### **Critical CHANGES**

- If VF or pulseless VT → SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-2
- If PEA or asystole 

  NON-SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-3

#### **During RESUSCITATION**

In cardiac arrest:

- Confirm hyperkalaemia using blood gas analyser if available
- Give calcium chloride –*or* calcium gluconate by rapid bolus
- Give insulin/dextrose by rapid bolus
- Give sodium bicarbonate by rapid bolus
- Consider dialysis if hyperkalaemia resistant to medical therapy

#### **Common CAUSATIVE AGENTS**

- ACE inhibitors/Angiotensin II receptor antagonists
- Potassium-sparing diuretics
- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs
- Beta-blockers
- Trimethoprim
- Potassium supplements and IV infusions





## 3-6 | Massive haemorrhage

**v0-5** October 2021

Uncontrolled haemorrhage is the cause of traumatic cardiac arrest in 48% of cases, and early haemorrhage control is essential. Remember that even major bleeding may be concealed.

## START

- 1 Call for help and consider requesting resuscitation trolley
  - Declare 'major haemorrhage'
  - ► Call anaesthetic and/or surgical/radiological support if appropriate
- 2 Insert IV cannula if not already present
  - Insert IO access if IV not feasible
  - ► Take blood for FBC, clotting, fibrinogen, and cross-matching
  - ► Take **POCT-coagulation monitoring** (e.g. TEG or ROTEM)
- 3 Check for obvious bleeding points
  - ▶ Elevate site, apply pressure, and/or apply tourniquet if possible
  - Surgical or IR control if incompressible haemorrhage
  - ► Apply topical haemostatic agent if available
  - Use imaging to locate concealed sources
- Give IV fluid challenge(s) or blood products
  - Start fluid warmer
  - Give blood products as early as possible
  - Apply pressure bag to fluids or use rapid-infusion device
- 5 Give medical management
  - Give tranexamic acid
  - Check for hypocalcaemia
  - Reverse anticoagulant drugs
- 6 Insert urinary catheter and check urine output hourly
- Reassess patient regularly
  - Check temperature, FBC, clotting, fibrinogen, potassium and lactate
  - ► Check for cardiac failure

DRUG DOSES and treatments			
Tranexamic acid	1 g IV over 10 min <i>–then–</i> 1 g IV over 8 h		
Calcium replacement	10 mL IV 10% calcium chloride <i>–or–</i> 30 mL IV 10% calcium gluconate		
Initial fluid challenge	250 mL crystalloid bolus until blood		

#### **Critical CHANGES**

If infection found \$\Rightarrow\$ SEPSIS 3-8

If K<sup>+</sup> > 6.5 mmol L<sup>-1</sup> ⇒ SEVERE HYPERKALAEMIA 3-5

#### **During RESUSCITATION**

- · Control of ongoing bleeding is essential
- Urgent surgical input may be necessary
- Haematology assistance may be helpful where reversal of anticoagulation needed

#### **Considerations for FLUID MANAGEMENT**

- Multiple large-bore (14-16 G) cannulas are most appropriate
- Peripheral cannulas generally preferable to central venous lines for fluid challenges
- Use small volume boluses to maintain central circulation until blood products arrive
- Aim to restore normal circulating volume after control of bleeding

#### Considerations for BLOOD MANAGEMENT

- Early use of blood products is essential in major haemorrhage
- Use a ratio of 1 unit red cells to 1 unit FFP
- Platelets are likely to be needed
- Cryoprecipitate may be needed if fibrinogen low or bleeding prolonged
- Early involvement of the haematologist on call is helpful





## 3-7 | Massive pulmonary embolism (PE)

**v0-7** March 2022

Diagnostic features of massive PE include hypotension (systolic < 90/drop of 40 mmHg for >15 mins) and signs of tissue hypoperfusion in the context of known or suspected venous thromboembolism. Cardiac arrest may be a presenting or complicating feature.

## **START**

- 1 Call for help and consider requesting a resuscitation trolley
  - Identify team leader, allocate roles, and note the time
- 2 Check clinical status using the ABCDE approach
  - Check for symmetrical breath sounds and chest movements
  - ► Check respiratory rate, SpO<sub>2</sub>, and consider ABG
  - ► Check **ECG** and consider bedside **echocardiography** if available
  - Check Wells score for PE
  - Check D-dimer and eGFR
- 3 Give oxygen
  - ▶ Apply oxygen at 15 L min<sup>-1</sup> via reservoir mask initially
  - ► Titrate to SpO<sub>2</sub> 94-98% when monitoring available
- 4 Prepare for CTPA
  - ▶ If high-risk Wells score → CTPA immediately
  - Anticoagulation prior to scan if CTPA cannot be carried out immediately
- **5** Give anticoagulation after CTPA (if not already started)
  - ► If eGFR < 30 mL min<sup>-1</sup>/ 1.73 m<sup>2</sup> or increased risk bleeding → give unfractionated heparin
  - If haemodynamic instability → call for expert advice -then- give unfractionated heparin -and- fibrinolysis (tenecteplase -oralteplase)
  - ► Otherwise → give fondaparinux –or– low-molecular weight heparin
- 6 Consider transfer of patient to critical care setting
  - Consider the use of extracorporeal membrane oxygenation if available

#### **DRUG DOSES and treatments**

Unfractionated Heparin 5,000-10,000 units IV bolus -then-

18 units kg-1 hr-1 IV infusion\*

Fondaparinux Weight <50 kg: **5 mg SC** OD

50-100 kg: **7.5 mg SC** OD >100 kg: **10 mg SC** OD

Low-molecular weight heparin

▶ Dalteparin: 200 units kg-¹ SC OD

► Enoxaparin: **1.5 mg kg<sup>-1</sup> SC** OD if uncomplicated –*or*–

1 mg kg-1 SC BD if complicated

\*monitor APTTr regularly

#### **CARDIAC ARREST Treatment**

Tenecteplase **500-600 micrograms kg**-1 IV bolus –*or*– Alteplase **50 mg IV** bolus –*then*– if still in cardiac arrest

50 mg IV bolus after 30 minutes

#### **Critical CHANGES**

- If VF or pulseless VT⊃ SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-2
- If PEA or asystole 

  NON-SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-3
- If pregnant woman → OBSTETRIC CARDIAC ARREST 1-5

#### **During RESUSCITATION**

Malignancy

- Consider fibrinolysis (tenecteplase/alteplase) early if suspect PE
- Thrombectomy and extracorporeal CPR options in larger centres
- Prepare for prolonged CPR after fibrinolysis

#### WELLS Score for Pulmonary Embolism

PE likely if four or more points from:

	likely il loui of filore points from.	
•	Clinical signs and symptoms of DVT	3
•	Alternative diagnosis less likely than PE	3
•	Heart rate > 100	1.5
•	Immobilisation for > 3 days or surgery in last month	1.5
•	Previous DVT/PE	1.5
•	Haemontysis	1



GUIDELINES /2021

3-8 | Sepsis

**v0-7** March 2022

Sepsis: life-threatening organ dysfunction caused by a dysregulated host response to infection.

Septic shock: patient in whom vasopressors are required to maintain mean arterial pressure of  $\geq$  65 mmHg, and serum lactate  $\geq$  2 mmol L<sup>-1</sup>, despite adequate volume resuscitation.

## **START**

- 1 Call for help and consider requesting resuscitation trolley
  - ldentify team leader, allocate roles, and note the time
- 2 Check clinical status using the ABCDE approach
- 3 Give oxygen
  - ▶ Apply oxygen at 15 L min<sup>-1</sup> via reservoir mask initially
  - ► Titrate to SpO<sub>2</sub> 94-98% when monitoring available
- 4 Insert IV cannula if not already present
- If systolic blood pressure < 90 mmHg -or- lactate raised → give fluid challenge
  - Call senior decision maker for immediate review
- Check bloods for:
  - Venous blood gas (including lactate)
  - Blood culture
  - ► FBC, U&Es, CRP, clotting
- Give IV antibiotics immediately Check patient allergy status before prescribing
- 8 Check for source of sepsis
  - Treat source
  - Send source cultures if possible
- 9 Consider urethral catheterisation to monitor hourly urine output
- Call senior clinical decision maker (if not already contacted)
- Repeat clinical observations at least every 30 minutes
- **©** Consider transfer of patient to critical care setting

#### **DRUG DOSES and treatments**

Oxygen 15 L min<sup>-1</sup> via reservoir mask

Target SpO<sub>2</sub> of 94-98% (if risk of hypercapnic

respiratory failure → target 88-92%).

Antibiotics As per local guidelines

Broad spectrum empirical antibiotics for sepsis

of unknown origin unless source known.

Initial fluid challenge

No cardiac failure:
 Cardiac failure:
 500 mL<sup>-1</sup> IV crystalloid bolus consider reducing volume given

#### **Critical CHANGES**

- If VF or pulseless VT SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-2
- If PEA or asystole 

  NON-SHOCKABLE CARDIAC ARREST 1-3
- If K<sup>+</sup> > 6.5 mmol L<sup>-1</sup> **⇒ SEVERE HYPERKALAEMIA 3-5**

#### **During RESUSCITATION**

- Regular clinical observations and calculation of NEWS2 score essential.
- Arterial blood gas sampling may be necessary if respiratory involvement.
- Source identification include: thorough physical examination, urine cultures, chest radiography and abdominal/pelvic imaging.
- Source control may require specialist input (e.g. surgical intervention).
- Request patient notes to review any recent antibiotic treatment.
- · Consider early discussion with microbiology.
- Refer for critical care if hypotensive despite initial fluid resuscitation