

MOUNTAIN-VALLEY EMS AGENCY  
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

POLICY: 552.88

TITLE: CRITICAL CARE PARAMEDIC IV  
INFUSIONS OF MORPHINE SULFATE

APPROVED: Signature On File In EMS Office  
Executive Director  
  
Signature On File In EMS Office  
Medical Director

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**CRITICAL CARE PARAMEDIC IV INFUSIONS OF MORPHINE SULFATE**

**I. AUTHORITY**

Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 9, Chapter 4, Article 2

**II. PURPOSE**

To provide a mechanism for Critical Care Paramedics (CCPs) to monitor and adjust intravenous infusions of morphine sulfate during interfacility transfers.

**III. POLICY**

- A. Only those Mountain-Valley EMS Agency accredited CCPs who have successfully completed training program(s) approved by the Mountain-Valley EMS Agency Medical Director on morphine sulfate infusions will be permitted to monitor and adjust them during interfacility transports.
- B. Only those ALS ambulance providers approved by the Mountain-Valley EMS Agency Medical Director will be permitted to provide the service of monitoring morphine sulfate infusions during interfacility transports, from approved hospital(s) within their service area.

**IV. PROCEDURE**

**A. PRIOR TO TRANSFER:**

- 1. Patients that are candidates for paramedic transport will have pre-existing morphine sulfate drips only.
- 2. All medication drips will be in the form of an IV piggyback monitored by a mechanical pump familiar to the CCP.
- 3. Patients will not have more than two medicated drips running, exclusive of potassium chloride (KCl).
- 4. Morphine sulfate drips will not be initiated immediately prior to transport.

5. Transferring physicians must be aware of the general scope of practice of paramedics and the transport protocol parameters outlined below.
6. Signed orders with the specified drip rate from the transferring physician will be obtained prior to transport and reviewed with the transferring CCP.
7. CCPs are allowed to transport patients on morphine sulfate drips within the following parameters:
  - a. Physician orders regarding regulation of the drip rate will be within parameters as defined by the transferring physician and may be titrated during transport per written transfer orders.
  - b. In cases of severe respiratory depression, excessive sedation, confusion, hypotension, bradycardia, nausea and vomiting, the medication infusion will be discontinued and naloxone, if indicated, may be administered as directed by Mountain-Valley EMS Agency Protocol. Notify the transferring physician and base hospital immediately.

**B. DURING TRANSPORT**

1. Morphine sulfate drips will not be initiated by CCP during transport.
  2. All patients will be maintained on a cardiac monitor, pulse oximetry, end-tidal CO<sub>2</sub> and a non-invasive blood pressure monitor that will record blood pressure readings every five (5) minutes.
  3. Vital signs will be documented every five (5) minutes.
  4. If medication administration is interrupted (infiltration, accidental disconnection, malfunctioning pump, etc.), the CCP may restart the line as delineated in the transfer orders.
  5. In cases of IV pump malfunction that cannot be corrected, the medication drip will be discontinued and the transferring hospital and base hospital will be notified immediately.
  6. No other medication shall be given thru the same line.
- C. All calls will be audited by the ambulance provider agency and by the transferring hospitals. Audits will assess compliance with physician orders and regional protocols, including base hospital contact in emergency situations. Reports will be sent to the EMS Agency as requested.