



Central California Emergency Medical Services Agency

A Division of Fresno County  
Department of Public Health

### SPECIAL MEMORANDUM

FILE #: F/K/M/T #04-2019

TO: All Fresno/Kings/Madera/Tulare EMS Providers, Hospitals, First Responder Agencies, and Interested Parties

FROM: Jim Andrews, M.D., EMS Medical Director  
Daniel J. Lynch, Director

DATE: June 4, 2019

SUBJECT: Dextrose (D50) Shortage

The EMS Agency was notified that Dextrose is on back order by the manufacturer. It is uncertain when it will become available.

Since Dextrose is frequently used in the prehospital setting, the EMS Agency must prepare for the ambulance providers' inability to restock these medications once they have been used. Ambulance providers are requested to attempt to evenly disperse the Dextrose in their ambulances that are current, even if the amount on each ambulance falls below the County minimum. In instances where there is extreme shortage, the ambulance agencies should assure the primary ambulance has what is available, even if expired.

Due to the frequency of use for Dextrose (D50), the EMS Agency is allowing EMS personnel to consider oral glucose in all patients, no matter what the GCS. This can be applied by rubbing it on the inside of the patient's cheeks. If no response from the oral glucose, then D50 will need to be administered. When D50 has been exhausted from the inventory, Glucagon should be considered under the following protocols:

- EMS Policy #530.18 – Paramedic Treatment Protocols – Altered Mental Status, Possible Stroke, and Syncope
- EMS Policy #530.19 – Paramedic Treatment Protocols – Seizures

The EMS Agency expects that with the national shortage of D50 or any glucose products, ambulance providers will exhaust their inventory within the next few weeks. Once the current D50 has been exhausted from the inventory and is unavailable to the paramedic, the specific

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protocols should continue to be followed with the exception of D50. The Base Hospital should be contacted in these instances.

This is a temporary arrangement, and this special memo will be rescinded once Dextrose becomes available.

If you have any questions, please contact Dale Dotson, EMS Coordinator, at (559) 600-3387.

JA:DJL:rb