



# County of Santa Cruz

## HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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EMERGENCY MEDICAL  
SERVICES PROGRAM

**Policy No. 4060**  
**Reviewed 4/2009**

### **Emergency Medical Services Program**

Approved

**Medical Director**

**Subject: PATIENT RESTRAINT**

#### **I. Purpose:**

To provide guidelines for the use of restraints (physical & chemical) on patients in the pre-hospital setting. On occasion it becomes necessary to use restraints on patients when their behavior poses a danger to themselves and most importantly, the emergency personnel on scene. Patients with an ALOC have the potential to cause great bodily harm to themselves and others. In these situations it becomes imperative to be able to quickly and effectively restrain these patients from causing further harm.

#### **II. Procedure:**

##### A. Physical Restraints.

- 1.) Restraints may be applied at the discretion of field personnel with reasons documented on PCR.
- 2.) Only soft restraints may be used by field personnel. This does not include law enforcement.
- 3.) Restraints should be securely fastened to patient, but at no time should circulation be compromised. CSM distal to any restraint shall be assessed frequently.
- 4.) At no time shall a restrained patient be left unattended.

##### B. Chemical Restraints.

- 1.) Versed may be administered as a chemical restraint by sedating patients who are in an excited, agitated, combative state, and who pose a threat to themselves or emergency personnel.
- 2.) Reasonable attempts will be made to contact the Base Hospital prior to the use of Versed. When Base Contact is not possible given the imminent threat of the patient to him/herself and/or emergency personnel, paramedics may administer Midazolam 5-10mg IM on standing order to adult patients. Hospital contact should be attempted as soon as possible thereafter. Base station contact is required for the use of versed for chemical restraint on all pediatric patients (age 14 or younger).

- 3.) Paramedics will monitor the patient's airway, breathing, circulation and level of consciousness throughout the call.

C. Law enforcement.

- 1.) Field personnel should not hesitate to call for law enforcement in situations where patient restraint is needed. If field personnel safety is an issue, consider requesting an officer accompany the patient to the hospital.
- 2.) The various law enforcement agencies in Santa Cruz County have specific, although differing, policies on how certain patients are to be managed. At no time shall field personnel argue with the officer having jurisdiction of the crime scene.
- 3.) It is the role of field personnel to provide the best patient care possible within the parameters set forth by law enforcement procedures as dictated by officers on scene.
- 4.) All patients that have been placed into restraint devices (handcuffs, etc) by law enforcement shall be accompanied by a law enforcement officer who can remove the restraints if needed. At no time shall a patient be transported in restraints without the means to be removed if needed for patient care.