BLS PROVIDER ASSISTING ALS WITH PULSE OXIMETRY

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INDICATIONS:

- Respiratory distress
- Poor skin signs
- Altered level of consciousness
- Chest pain
- Patients meeting Trauma Criteria (see Policy # 310.30)

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

None

EQUIPMENT:

- Pulse oximeter
 - Sensor, appropriate size
 - Nail polish remover and gauze pad

PROCEDURE:

- 1. Select location i.e., finger, earlobe, toe (remove nail polish if necessary)
- 2. Attach sensor firmly in place
- 3. Allow the oximeter to provide a steady reading
- 4. Document SpO₂ level reading

DOCUMENTATION:

- Record initial and regular interval pulse oximetry readings
- Note time, delivery method, and flow rate when oxygen is provided

NOTES:

- OCEMS accredited EMT providers may assist ALS personnel to obtain an oxygen saturation value using a pulse oximeter at the direction of ALS personnel.
- Do not withhold oxygen therapy to obtain a room air pulse oximeter reading.
- Pulse oximetry is an additional assessment tool. Treat patients appropriately based upon the clinical presentation.
- Pulse Oximetry equipment must be maintained per manufacturer's recommendations.
- Motion and a loose sensor may result in inaccurate readings.
- Acrylic fingernails and fingernail polish may cause inaccurate pulse oximetry readings. Remove nail polish or use an alternate site.

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