



VCEMS Informational Bulletin



Bulletin 049

Date: 5/31/2019

Date: May 31, 2019

To: Ventura County hospitals, EMS providers, other healthcare providers, and citizens,

From: Daniel Shepherd, MD
Medical Director, Ventura County EMS Agency

Re: Updated Spinal Motion Restriction Policy

On June 1, 2019, the Ventura County EMS Agency implements a new policy that will dramatically change how EMS providers transport suspected trauma patients. Ventura County based EMS providers will no longer be routinely using rigid backboards; devices commonly used in an attempt to “immobilize” potentially injured patients. This is a significant departure from traditional EMS care, but is supported by research and clinical guidelines published by national organizations representing EMS, trauma, pediatric and emergency medicine providers. Research has demonstrated a potential harm with the routine use of backboards, but has failed to demonstrate a benefit that justifies their ongoing use. We anticipate this change will result in improved patient comfort and eliminate the adverse consequences of backboards.

The new policy, “0614 – Spinal Motion Restriction,” can be viewed on our website at <http://www.vchca.org/policies>. The policy includes references to the clinical guidelines mentioned above.

Please direct any questions or concerns to my office at 805-981-5301.

Ventura County EMS Agency
805-981-5301 – Phone
805-981-5300 – Fax
<http://vchca.org/ems>