

Shortness of Breath – Pulmonary Edema

BLS Procedures

Administer oxygen as indicated

Initiate CPAP for moderate to severe distress

ALS Standing Orders

Nitroglycerin

- SL or lingual spray – 0.4 mg q 1 min x 3
 - Repeat 0.4 mg q 2 min
 - No max dosage
 - Hold for SBP < 100 mmHg

If not already performed by BLS personnel, Initiate CPAP for moderate to severe distress

Perform 12-lead ECG (Per VCEMS Policy 726)

IV/IO access

If wheezes are present and suspect COPD/Asthma, consider:

- **Albuterol**
 - Nebulizer – 5 mg/6 mL
 - Repeat as needed

If patient presents or becomes hypotensive

- Epinephrine 10 mcg/mL
 - 1mL (10 mcg) q 2 minutes, slow IV/IO push
 - Titrate to SBP of greater than or equal to 90 mm/Hg

Base Hospital Orders only

Consult with ED Physician for further treatment measures

Additional Information:

- Refer to VCEMS Policy 735 for additional information on preparing push dose epinephrine solution.
- Nitroglycerin is contraindicated when phosphodiesterase inhibitor medications [Sildenafil (Viagra and Revatio), Vardenafil (Levitra), and Tadalafil (Cialis)] have been recently used (Viagra or Levitra within 24 hours; Cialis within 48 hours). These medications are most commonly used to treat erectile dysfunction or pulmonary hypertension. In this situation, NTG may only be given by ED Physician order.

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EMS Medical Director