



ALBERTA COLLEGE OF PARAMEDICS

Research, Audit & Development Committee

Position Statement: CPR prior to defibrillation

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Disclaimer:

This position statement is produced as a guide for the Provincial Registration Examination only. It is not intended as a teaching tool or for clinical practice.

Position Statement:

Witnessed Arrest

- In a witnessed arrest the pre-hospital responder should defibrillate as soon as possible. CPR should be administered only until a defibrillator/AED is available

Unwitnessed Arrest

- When the arrest is not witnessed it is acceptable to perform 5 cycles of CPR (about 2 minutes) before checking the rhythm and administering defibrillation.
- It is also acceptable to perform immediate defibrillation as described in “witnessed arrest”

New guidelines for ACLS:

- In studies when EMS call to arrival intervals were 4-5 minutes longer, victims who received 1 ½ to 3 minutes of CPR prior to defibrillation showed an increased rate of initial resuscitation, survival to hospital discharge, and 1 year survival when compared with those who received immediate defibrillation for VF sudden cardiac arrest.
- One randomized study showed no benefit to CPR prior to defibrillation.