



<b>REGION 11 CHICAGO EMS SYSTEM POLICY</b>	Title: Safe Transport of Children by EMS
	Section: Patient Care
	Approved: EMS Medical Directors Consortium
	Effective: June 1, 2023

## **SAFE TRANSPORT OF CHILDREN BY EMS**

### **I. PURPOSE**

- A. To define the safe transport of children by EMS personnel in a ground ambulance.
- B. To prevent forward motion and possible ejection with a primary focus to secure the torso; and provide support for the head, neck, and spine of all children transported by ambulance.

### **II. DEFINITIONS**

- A. Child Restraint System (CRS): Any device (including child safety seat, booster seat, or harness) that is designed for use in a motor vehicle to restrain, seat, or position children who weigh 65 pounds (30 kilograms) or less and are certified to the federal motor vehicle safety standard prescribed by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration for child restraints.
- B. Spinal Motion Restriction (SMR): Attempting to maintain the head, neck, and torso in anatomic alignment and independent from device use.

### **III. POLICY**

- A. EMS provider agencies in the Region 11 Chicago EMS System that transport children should develop specific policies and procedures to address the methods, training (initial and continuing), and equipment to safely transport children.
- B. There are specific considerations for varied situations when a child needs transport to a hospital including:
  - 1. Uninjured and not ill
  - 2. Ill or injured, but requiring no intensive interventions or monitoring
  - 3. Requiring intensive interventions or monitoring
  - 4. Requiring spinal motion restriction and/or lying flat
  - 5. Multiple patients
- C. No children should be transported unrestrained (such as held in arms or lap).
- D. No children should be transported on the bench seat.



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- E. When the number of patients exceeds the ability to provide adequate care with existing EMS providers and ambulances, or to secure child patients as described in the following recommendations, EMS providers should request additional transportation resources that can respond in a timely manner.

### **IV. TRANSPORT SITUATIONS**

#### **A. Uninjured and Not Ill**

1. When EMS has an injured or ill parent, guardian, or caregiver who needs transportation to the hospital with uninjured and not ill children on scene – it is best to leave the child in the care of a responsible adult.
2. If the child needs to accompany the patient to the hospital, transport the child with appropriate child restraint system depending on the age and size of the child.

#### **B. Injured or Ill**

##### **1. Requiring No Intensive Interventions or Monitoring**

- a. Transport the child in a size-appropriate child restraint system secured appropriately on cot.

##### **2. Requiring Intensive Interventions or Monitoring**

- a. Transport the child in a size-appropriate child restraint system secured appropriately on cot.
- b. If the child's condition requires medical interventions, which requires the removal of some restraints, the restraints should be re-secured as quickly as possible as soon as the interventions are completed and it is medically feasible to do so.

##### **3. Requiring Spinal Motion Restriction and/or Lying Flat**

- a. Transport the child in a size-appropriate child restraint system secured appropriately on cot.
- b. Apply a pediatric cervical collar or use towel rolls to stabilize neck and torso movement.

#### **C. Multiple Patients**

1. If possible, for multiple patients, transport each as a single patient according to the guidance shown for the above transport situations.
2. For mother and newborn, transport the newborn in an approved size-appropriate child restraint system. The mother should be properly secured to the cot.



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3. A child passenger, especially a newborn, must never be transported on an adult's lap. Newborns must always be transported in an appropriate child restraint system. Never allow anyone to hold a newborn during transport.

## **V. CHILD RESTRAINT SYSTEMS**

- A. The device(s) should cover, at minimum, a weight range of between five (5) and 99 pounds (2.3 - 45 kg), ideally supporting the safest transport possible for all persons of any age or size.
- B. Only the manufacturer's recommendations for the weight/size of the patient should be considered when selecting the appropriate device for the specific child being transported.