



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
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To: Massachusetts Licensed Ambulance Services, Affiliate Hospital Medical Directors, EMCAB Members and Accredited EMT Training Institutions

From: Mark Miller, MS, NRP
Director, Office of Emergency Medical Services

Jon Burstein, MD
State EMS Medical Director

Date: September 26, 2017

RE: Emergency Non-Opioid Pain Treatment Options Update

The Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) and the Medical Services Committee (MSC) recently conducted a review of the pain treatment options that are carried on paramedic-level advanced life support (ALS) ambulances. This process, which included review of the Drug Formulary Commission's [list](#)¹ of non-opioid drug products that are effective pain management alternatives, uncovered that there is a gap in the current treatment for pain related issues. There is an apparent need to increase the number of non-opioid options for all patients, while still remembering that ice, padding of injuries, positioning for comfort and hand-holding are valuable skills of our EMS personnel.

In response, the MSC voted to recommend that OEMS issue an emergency protocol change to allow the use of three non-opioid medications: ketorolac, acetaminophen, and ibuprofen. These medications will increase the number of pain relieving choices for EMS and meet the need for a non-opioid pain treatment pathway. This recommendation has been accepted by OEMS and the Department of Public Health.

The new medications listed below have been added to the Massachusetts Statewide Treatment Protocols, effective immediately, and are available to be implemented immediately with training on this protocol as approved by their affiliate hospital medical director. These medications should assist EMS with addressing a patient's pain and making sure the right medications for various aspects of pain and discomfort are available. The intention of these additions is to encourage safe thoughtful administration of the medication that provides the best reductions in pain and discomfort while allowing for better patient-directed treatment.

¹ <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/hcq/drug-control/dfc-non-opioid-drug-products.html>

The following medications will be required on paramedic ambulances, with minimum supply quantities as noted, beginning **January 1, 2018**. The attached updated Protocol 2.13 for Pain and Nausea Management, Version 2016.3, provides dosing, relative contraindications and contraindications. Medical Control can always be contacted to help answer questions regarding a particular patient.

Ibuprofen PO:	Bottle or individually wrapped. 1200 mg minimum
Acetaminophen PO:	Bottle or individually wrapped. 2000 mg minimum
Ketorolac IV or IM:	60 mg

The following medication is optional until further notice:

Acetaminophen IV: 2000 mg minimum

Additionally, the Department would like to remind you about the [Voluntary Non-Opioid Directive](#) program that allows individuals to decline in advance any treatment options that include opioids. If a person does not want opioids to be administered to them or offered as a treatment option, they may fill out and present the signed Directive to a care provider or responding EMS personnel at any time. More information on the Voluntary Non-Opioid Directive may be found at: <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/emergency-services/advisories/non-opioid-directive.pdf>.

If you have any questions on this change, please contact Renee Atherton at renee.atherton@state.ma.us or Jonathan Burstein at jon.burstein@state.ma.us.