

**Kent County EMS, Inc.**  
**Community Paramedicine Protocol**  
Respiratory Distress

Initial Date: 10/21/2019

Revised Date:

Section 11-9

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## ***Respiratory Distress***

This protocol provides general guidance for the evaluation of patient with respiratory symptoms by the Community Paramedic/Mobile Integrated Health Paramedic (CP/MIHP).

**Purpose:** Evaluation and treatment of patient with respiratory symptoms. These patients will have a known diagnosis of asthma or COPD.

### **TANDEM365 Directives:**

1. Follow *General Treatment Protocol 11-2*.
2. Review patient health history and primary care provider or other specialty physician standing orders prior to assessment when possible.
3. If shortness of breath is present along with wheezing or diminished breath sounds, the CP/MIHP will perform the following:
  - a. Administer nebulizer treatment using DuoNeb – 2.5ml albuterol/0.5ml ipratropium bromide. Refer to the Nebulized Bronchodilator County Protocol.
  - b. May repeat nebulizer 5 minutes after initial DuoNeb administration using 2.5ml only albuterol solution.
  - c. If there is no improvement in lung assessment or breathing, the CP/MIHP will administer 125mg solumedrol IV/IM x1 dose.
  - d. After treatment, the patient will be reassessed. Treatment goals include decrease in shortness of breath, decreased respiratory rate, and improvement in lung sounds.
4. If no wheezing or diminished breath sounds are present, perform medication review and participant education.
  - a. Review pathophysiology with the participant.
  - b. Further history will include exacerbating factors including viral exposure, allergen exposure, exercise, cold air, tobacco smoke, chemical irritants, etc.
  - c. Observe home to possibly identify exacerbating factors.
  - d. Review devices used by the participant including short/long acting medications, and MDI/continuous nebulizer devices.
5. The CP/MIHP will communicate with the participant's care team as outlined in the *General Treatment Protocol 11-2* to develop a continuity plan.