

CSHCN – VENTILATOR SUPPORT

Ventilators and BiPAP are medical devices designed to assist with ventilation of the special needs patient. Symptoms of failure of the ventilator or BiPAP machine may include: apnea and/or cyanosis, medication or environmental reactions, nasal flaring, and altered levels of consciousness. BiPAP machines are used to augment patient breathing and do not ventilate them.

Patients with home medical devices have caregivers that are well-educated as to their usage. If they are calling EMS, it is usually because they are in trouble and have tried everything to get things back to normal, or they are having a problem with the equipment but the child is sick and they need help transporting the equipment and the child to the hospital.

- A. Perform **Initial Treatment / Universal Patient Care Protocol** and follow the proper protocol for medical management based on clinical presentation.
- B. If not breathing:
 1. Disconnect the ventilator tubing from the patient.
 2. Attach the bag-valve device to the patient and begin manual ventilation.
 - a. If chest rise is shallow, adjust the patient's airway position and check to see that the bag valve device is securely connected to the tracheostomy.
 - b. Assess the airway for obstruction. Follow tracheostomy protocol to open the airway.
 - c. Assess for equal chest rise and breath sounds bilaterally.
 - d. Assist caregiver in trouble-shooting the equipment to check for problems.
- C. Obtain a complete history of the present illness, past medical history, and interventions taken to correct the emergency before EMS arrival.