

POSITION PAPERS

NAEMSP POSITION STATEMENT

THE ROLE OF EMS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF ACUTE STROKE: TRIAGE, TREATMENT, AND STROKE SYSTEMS

This position replaces the former position statement entitled Acute Stroke: Implications for Out-of-Hospital Care

The National Association of EMS Physicians believes that:

1. Patients with acute stroke symptoms should receive expeditious EMS dispatch and response.
2. EMS personnel should be knowledgeable in the assessment, management, and triage of suspected stroke patients. Personnel should be skilled in the performance of prehospital stroke screening and in determining the timing, onset, and nature of symptoms.
3. Because some acute stroke treatments require the provision of definitive care within a specific time frame, EMS personnel should communicate with the receiving facilities as soon as possible.
4. EMS protocols should be consistent with evidence-based treatment practices for stroke patients and should be consistent with local/regional resources.
5. EMS systems and medical directors should develop local/regional strategies for treating, triaging, and transporting patients with acute stroke symptoms, including the identification of centers that are capable of treating acute stroke patients and the criteria for identifying the patients who should be transported to such centers.