



**ORANGE COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**  
**BASIC LIFE SUPPORT PROCEDURES**  
**BLS PROVIDER ASSISTING WITH METERED DOSE INHALER**  
**(MDI)**

#: B-20  
Page: 1 of 1  
Orig. Date: 9/1/2009  
Revised: 03/10/2022

**INDICATIONS:**

- Respiratory distress in a patient with a prescribed Albuterol or ipratropium (Atrovent ®) MDI

**CONTRAINDICATIONS:**

- Altered mental status
- Prescribed inhaler has expired
- Known allergy to medication delivered by MDI

**EQUIPMENT:**

- Personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Blood pressure cuff and stethoscope
- Oxygen delivery equipment

**PROCEDURE:**

1. Assure that ALS responders are en-route
2. Perform a complete assessment on the patient to include medical history, medications, and allergies to medication
3. Verify respiratory distress (wheezing, use of accessory muscles, labored breathing)
4. Provide supplemental oxygen at a flow rate that is appropriate for the patient and condition
5. Verify MDI is labeled and prescribed for patient and not expired
6. Shake MDI well (approximately 4-5 times)
7. Assist patient with administration of MDI medication
  - a. Remove nozzle cover if present
  - b. Have patient exhale and place MDI to lips
  - c. Have patient seal lips around nozzle and inhale
  - d. Fully depress medication canister into holder while patient inhales
  - e. Remove MDI and have patient hold breath for 10 seconds or as long as comfortable
  - f. Allow patient to resume breathing and when possible repeat second dose following steps a - e above.
8. Resume oxygen therapy after administration of medication
9. Update vital signs every ten (10) minutes and document

**DOCUMENTATION:**

- Complete Assessment including initial and updated vital signs
- Time(s) for assisted administration of MDI
- Description of why the patient needed assistance with inhaler

**NOTES:**

- Give detailed report to ALS personnel when they arrive, including time(s) MDI used
- Absence of wheezing may be due to low air exchange (shallow breathing from severe disease)
- For patient with difficulty speaking, always consider upper airway obstruction

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carl Schultz".

Review Date: 03/22  
Initial Release Date: 4/01/2022  
Final Implementation Date: 10/01/2022  
OCEMS copyright © 2022