



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive



<b>CLINICAL DIRECTIVE 03/2011</b>
<b>FROM: Medical Director</b>
<b>TO: Emergency Medical Controllers, Emergency Medical Technicians, Paramedics, Advanced Paramedics</b>
<p><b>SUBJECT: Aspirin administration</b></p> <p>1. It is imperative that Emergency Medical Controllers instruct callers being dealt with as Chief Complaint "10 Chest Pain (Non-Traumatic)" or Chief Complaint "19 Heart Problems/AICD" who are being advised to take aspirin that the aspirin is <i>chewed</i> as per instructions in AMPDS "ASA Aspirin Diagnostic and Instructions",</p> <p>2. If Paramedics/Advanced Paramedics encounter patients that should have aspirin administered as per CPG Cardiac Chest Pain-Acute Coronary Syndrome 5/5.4.16, and the patient has swallowed an aspirin preparation without chewing it, the patient should be regarded as not having taken any aspirin and administered a dose of aspirin as per the CPG</p>
<p><b>RATIONALE:</b></p> <p>Enteric coated aspirin preparations are designed to pass through the stomach and be absorbed slowly in the intestine. Their time of onset is uncertain and often delayed, and in the context of Acute Coronary Syndrome (ACS) patients, do not reliably exert a platelet inhibiting effect in the time scales required. Therefore, unless they have been chewed, they are not considered to be effective. There are a number of aspirin preparations available on the Irish market, many of them enteric coated. Ensuring that patients chew aspirin preparations maximises the chance of those with ACS getting a therapeutic dose of aspirin in a timely manner.</p>
<b>EFFECTIVE FROM: 04/04/2011</b>
<b>EFFECTIVE TO: Indefinite</b>
<p><b>QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS ON THIS DIRECTIVE:</b></p> <p>To Education and Competency Assurance Officer</p>

Clinical Directives are formulated by the National Ambulance Service Medical Directorate, the National Ambulance Service Education and Competency Assurance Team, the Dublin Fire Brigade Medical Director, the Dublin Fire Brigade EMS Support Team and the Irish Coast Guard Chief Crewman (Standards). Clinical Directives apply to all relevant staff in the HSE National Ambulance Service, Dublin Fire Brigade and Irish Coast Guard helicopter winch-crew.

Seirbhís Náisiúnta Otharchairr  
Teach Dara, Ascaill an Crann Teile, Páirc na Mílaoise, Nás na Rí, Co. Chill Dara

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