

Helicopter Early Launch Process Guidelines **SAC Air Ambulance Subcommittee**

Definition: Helicopter Early Launch Process (HELP) is the request for an air ambulance response prior to EMS arrival on scene.

- I. The Helicopter Early Launch Process should be considered when first response EMS is greater than **20** minutes from the ill or injured patient with the following mechanism or conditions:

(The very young and the very old should be given special consideration)

- A. **Trauma Patient with apparent significant injury** following a mechanism or condition such as:

1. Amputation, Crushed or Mangled Extremity
2. Bleeding, Uncontrolled
3. Drowning/Near Drowning
4. Farming/Industrial/Logging Accidents
5. Head Injury with Decreased Level of Consciousness
6. Motor Vehicle Crash (significant examples: Ejection, Rollover, Fatality in Same Vehicle)
7. Motorcycle or ATV crash
8. Paralysis, new
9. Pedestrian Struck by a Motor Vehicle
10. Penetrating Trauma of Head, Chest, Abdomen or Groin
11. Pregnant Patient

- B. **Burn Patient**

1. Explosive Mechanism with Burns and/or Traumatic Injuries
2. Facial Burns in Closed Space with Difficulty Breathing or Hoarse Voice

- C. **Medical Patient**

1. Anaphylaxis or Severe Allergic Reaction
2. Bleeding, Uncontrolled
3. Chest Pain, Severe Non-Trauma or Suspected STEMI
4. Poisoning/Overdose with Severe Decreased Level of Consciousness
5. Respiratory Distress, Severe
6. Seizure, Continuous
7. Stroke, Suspected: Inability to Talk or Difficulty Speaking or New Paralysis on One Side

II. An air ambulance should be considered when it will assist the Time Critical Diagnosis patient in arriving at the appropriate facility during the time window specific to the disease.

Note: These guidelines were developed by the Air Ambulance Subcommittee to be used by agencies that incorporate early launch into their guidelines/protocols.