

ValleyCare OLIVE VIEW-UCLA MEDICAL CENTER
HEALTH CENTERS
POLICY & PROCEDURE

NUMBER: 52

SUBJECT/TITLE:

**ORDERING PROCEDURES AND TRANSPORT OF
PATIENTS WITH SUSPECTED CORD COMPRESSION**

DEPARTMENT: RADIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

POLICY: All patients with suspected cord compression and neurological deficit are to be accompanied by staff trained in spine immobilization.

PURPOSE: To specify transportation requirements on patients with suspected spinal cord compression.

KEYWORDS: Cord compression

PROCEDURE:

Any patient with threatened cord compression and significant neurological deficit is to be accompanied by staff trained in spine immobilization. The escort will assist radiology staff in transfer of patient to and from the imaging table and the gurney.

Any patient whose condition is **critical** is to be transported per hospital guidelines for critically ill patients. For patients undergoing a MRI to rule out traumatic injury to the cervical spine or the rest of the spinal cord in the setting of significant trauma, appropriate spinal immobilization (e.g., cervical collar) is to be used and level of escort staff is to be determined by the referring physician. Transportation in the company of a physician who will supervise, assist in the transfer of patient from gurney unto the MRI scanner and removal of the cervical collar, if applicable. The physician is required to also help assist in the patient transfer from scanner onto the gurney and re-placement of cervical collar, if applicable, and accompany patient back to the E.R.

II. Indications for MR of the Spinal Cord

- a. Area specific MRI, such as cervical, lumbar or thoracic spine may be ordered by the ER during the business hours of MRI operation, 7am to midnight, Monday through Friday.

- b. Full spine MRI's may be ordered in the setting of known or strongly suspected metastatic cancer by the E.R., Medicine or Oncology services during business hours of MRI operation.

- c. Emergent MRI orders to rule out cord compression will require approval of ER attending and radiologist approval to confirm MRI indication. See policy 5853 for detailed indications for emergent spine MRI.

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Review Date: 7/8/11	Revision Date: 7/8/2011
Distribution: All Departments	
Original Date: 5/2011	