



SCR OEC6 Changes

Central Division
South Central Region

Aspirin & Nitroglycerin



The OEC6 standard of training now provides for patrollers to assist in the administration of these two medications:

- **Aspirin** – “Evidence-based medicine now recommends that a layperson assist a person who is having a myocardial infarction (heart attack) chew and swallow 1 adult (325 mg) or 4 pediatric (81 mg) tablets as soon as symptoms appear.” (pg 330)
- **Nitroglycerin** – “Some patients with angina pectoris may carry their own nitroglycerin, a medication used to relieve chest pain. If the patient’s own nitroglycerin is available, you may need to assist the patient in taking this medicine.” (pg 329)

Dr. Jake Zadra (Medical Advisor, NSP South-Central Region) has authored two additional medical bulletins that contain important considerations in the administration of these medications. The articles can be found on the nspsouthcentral.org website in the Articles/Medical Bulletins section. They contain practical Ski Patrol guidance on assisting a patient in the use of these medications, and caution when considering this course of action.

The following represents excerpts from pages 268, 321, and 329-311 of the 6th edition of the OEC manual. Please refer to these for the complete text.

Aspirin	Nitroglycerin
<p>Steps for administration:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confirm that the patient is not allergic to aspirin. 2. Confirm there is no obvious GI bleeding (recent trauma, vomiting of blood, or blood in the stool). 3. Select the proper dosage of aspirin. 4. Check the expiration date of the aspirin; do not use if expired. 5. Put on your disposable gloves and place the aspirin in the patient’s hand. Instruct the patient to chew the aspirin before swallowing. 6. A sip of water may help get the aspirin into the stomach. <p>Document the date, time, and dosage administered. Reassess the patient frequently, including the vital signs.</p>	<p>Steps for administration:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check systolic blood pressure to ensure it is over 100 mm Hg. 2. Check to make sure the medication is prescribed for this patient and that it has not expired. 3. Put on your disposable gloves, and then remove one tablet from the bottle and place the tablet in the patient’s hand. 4. Instruct the patient to place the medication under the tongue and to allow it to dissolve completely. Tell the patient not to chew or swallow the tablet. If necessary, assist the patient by putting the medication in place once the patient has lifted the tongue. <p>To assist patients in taking their own nitroglycerin sublingual spray, follow the steps in OEC Skill 15-1 on page 331.</p>

	If the patient is still experiencing chest pain, you may assist in taking two more doses of nitroglycerin, for a total of three doses at 5-minute intervals.
<p>Contraindications:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allergic to aspirin. 2. Obvious GI bleeding (recent trauma, vomiting blood, or blood in the stool). 3. Suspected aortic dissection. 4. Impaired ability to swallow. 	<p>Contraindications:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The nitroglycerin is expired. 2. The nitroglycerin is not prescribed for that patient. 3. Systolic blood pressure is less than 100 mm Hg. 4. The patient has taken three doses of nitroglycerin for this episode of chest pain. 5. The patient has used a medication for erectile dysfunction or altitude illness prevention (e.g., Viagra, Levitra, Cialis) within the past 24 hours. 6. Chest pain is due to trauma (is not cardiac in origin).

Other references in OEC 6th edition:

Pg 268 – Aspirin background.



Pg 321 – Nitroglycerin background.



Pg 329 – Nitroglycerin, additional considerations regarding administration.

Pg 330 – Aspirin, how it helps a myocardial infarction (heart attack).

Pg 331 – Aspirin, additional considerations regarding administration.

Pg 331 - What does Aspirin Do?

Since its origins in 1939 as “Ski Safety and First Aid”, today’s Outdoor Emergency Care has come a long way. The OEC curricula has continually evolved as new medical information becomes available. OEC is written following the principle of *evidence-based medicine*, and thus the changes that come with each new edition. The source for the content in this bulletin is the 6th edition of Outdoor Emergency Care manual.