



PEDIATRIC PATIENTS with SPECIAL HEALTHCARE NEEDS



Escambia County, Florida - ALS/BLS Medical Protocol

These protocols cover specific types of special healthcare needs in pediatric patients.

“Children with special healthcare needs are those who have or are at risk for chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, and emotional conditions that necessitate use of health and related services of a type or amount not usually required by typically developing children.”¹

The general approach to children with special healthcare needs includes the following:

1. Priority is given to the ABCs.
2. Do not be overwhelmed by the machines.
3. Listen to the caregiver.
4. If a nurse is present, rely on their judgment.
5. Remember...the child's cognitive level of function may be altered.
6. Assume that the child can understand exactly what you say.
7. Bring all medications and equipment to the hospital.

Obtaining a history includes asking the parent/caregiver the following:

1. Child's normal vital signs.
2. Child's actual weight.
3. Developmental level of the child.
4. Child's allergies – include latex.
5. Pertinent medications/therapies.

¹
(American Heart Association: PALS Provider Manual, 2002: p.287.)



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