

# WEST MICHIGAN REGIONAL PROTOCOL

## VAGAL MANEUVERS PROCEDURE

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**Purpose:** To provide the procedure for the performance of vagal maneuvers such as carotid sinus massage and Valsalva's maneuver. This procedure is for Paramedic use only.

### I. Indications

- A. SVT

### II. Contraindications

- A. Patient < 8 years old.
- B. Presence of carotid bruit
- C. Diagnosis of prior CVA or carotid surgery

### III. Equipment Needed

- A. Personal protective equipment
- B. EKG Monitor
- C. Patent vascular access
- D. Oxygen

### IV. Procedure

- A. Utilize universal precautions.
- B. Ensure that patient has oxygen, a patent IV, and is on a cardiac monitor. Run EKG strip during procedure.
- C. Instruct the patient to cough forcefully several times.  
If this is ineffective:
  - 1. Explain Valsalva's Maneuver to the patient.
  - 2. Instruct the patient to perform Valsalva's Maneuver:
    - a. Have patient take a deep breath and bear down.
    - b. Maintain this maneuver for as long as possible.

**Note: This may be done prior to Medical Control Contact**

- D. If no response to Valsalva's Maneuver, **and after contacting Medical Control**, proceed with Carotid Sinus Massage.
  - 1. Check for equality of carotid pulses and bruits; rotate head to left to expose right carotid sinus.
  - 2. Properly locate right carotid sinus adjacent to carotid pulse immediately inferior to the angle of the jaw.
  - 3. Using flat side of 2-3 fingers, press firmly over carotid sinus toward cervical vertebrae and massage up and back in a circular motion.
  - 4. Discontinue the procedure:
    - a. After 20 seconds, or
    - b. At first sign of slowing heart rate, or
    - c. If patient experiences dizziness or altered level of consciousness
  - 5. Repeat procedure once on opposite side if necessary and not contraindicated.

### V. Documentation

- A. Results of initial assessment and indications for procedure
- B. How order was obtained and by whom
- C. Site used for procedure and how performed
- D. Time performed and completed
- E. Any noted changes in patient condition following the procedure
- F. Any noted difficulty with procedure
- G. Any noted complications

