

PNEUMOTHORAX / TENSION PNEUMOTHORAX

ALWAYS USE BODY SUBSTANCE ISOLATION PRECAUTIONS

INDICATION

- Acute onset of respiratory distress with decreased unilateral or bilateral breath sounds. Signs and symptoms may include the following:
 - Extreme dyspnea
 - Neck vein distension
 - Agitation
 - Hypotension
 - Cyanosis
 - Hyperresonance to percussion on affected side
 - Tracheal shift away from the affected side

TREATMENT

- ALS RMC
- Needle thoracostomy on affected side with signs of tension pneumothorax
- Rapid transport

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

- Condition may be precipitated by the following:
 - Trauma
 - Pre-existing lung disease
 - Cancer related treatment
 - Marfan's syndrome

DOCUMENTATION- ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

- Decompression site
- SAO2 before and after decompression

RELATED POLICIES/ PROCEDURES

- Needle Thoracostomy and Pleural Decompression Procedure ALS PR 8