

**APPARENT LIFE-THREATENING EVENT - ALTE (# 7317)****• Pediatric Routine Medical Care****1. Definition:**

- 1.1 An Apparent Life-Threatening Event (ALTE) was formally known as a “near-miss SIDS” episode.
- 1.2 An ALTE is an episode that is **frightening to the observer** (may think the infant has died) and involves some combination of:
  - ✓ **Apnea** (central or obstructive)
  - ✓ **Color change** (cyanosis, pallor, erythema, plethora)
  - ✓ **Marked change in muscle tone** (limpness)
  - ✓ **Choking or gagging**
- 1.3 Usually occurs in infants < 12 months old, however, any child less than 2 years old who exhibits the symptoms in #1 may be considered an ALTE.
- 1.4 Most have a normal physical exam when assessed by responding field personnel..
- 1.5 50 – 60% have no known etiology
- 1.6 40 – 50% have an identifiable etiology  
(*e.g. Child abuse, SIDS, swallowing dysfunction, infection, bronchiolitis, seizures, CNS anomalies, tumors, cardiac disease, chronic respiratory disease, upper airway obstruction, metabolic disorders, or anemia*)

**2. Management**

- 2.1 Assume the history given is accurate.
- 2.2 Determine the **severity, nature** and **duration** of the episode
  - ✓ was the patient awake or asleep at the time of the episode
  - ✓ details of the resuscitation required
- 2.3 Obtain a **medical history**
  - ✓ known chronic diseases
  - ✓ evidence of seizure activity
  - ✓ current or recent infections
  - ✓ gastroesophageal reflux
  - ✓ inappropriate mixture of formula
  - ✓ recent trauma
  - ✓ medication history (current and recent)
- 2.4 Do a **comprehensive physical exam** that includes the general appearance of the child, skin color, extent of interaction with environment, and evidence of trauma.
- 2.5 Perform **glucose analysis** if hypoglycemia suspected  
(see ALOC policy # 7310 if B.S. < 60mg %)
- 2.6 Treat any identifiable causes.
- 2.7 Transport.
- 2.8 **Note:** **Contact the base physician for consultation** if the parent/guardian is refusing medical care and/or transport, prior to completing a Refusal of Care form.