

Date Adopted	11/93	Section	300 Unusual Incidents
Date Revised	10/94, 08/02, 08/14	Subject	306 Identifying Sickness/Illness
Rule Referenced			

## **306 Identifying Sickness/Illness**

Choices In Community Living, Inc. is committed to maintaining the safety and good health of its clients.

If a client becomes ill (i.e. complains of or indicates headache, stomach ache, etc.):

1. Take the client's temperature, if applicable.
2. Administer the over-the-counter medication that is recommended by the client's doctor.

If the illness persists:

3. If the illness persists for several hours, notify the client's doctor and/or take the client to the emergency room.
4. Follow the procedure for defining and reporting Major Unusual Incidents and Unusual Incidents.

If a client is injured:

1. Immediately determine whether first aid or emergency medical service is necessary.
2. Administer first aid or call 911, as applicable.
3. Follow the procedure for defining and reporting Major Unusual Incidents and Unusual Incidents.

The overnight or early morning staff assesses the client's condition and assists in determining if the client will attend day programming. The overnight or early morning staff notifies the Program Administrator of the decision and notifies the day program provider if the client will not attend.

### **Urgent Situations**

There are several levels of urgent situations which require speed of action and medical care appropriate to the situation. Stabilize and evaluate minor injuries on the site and later transport either to the hospital or home, as applicable. Major illnesses and injuries require hospital care within the hour. Emergencies require action within minutes. When an individual appears to have a medical emergency, staff are expected to immediately contact 911 and provide emergency care as trained in Red Cross guidelines of CPR and First Aid treatments.

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An emergency is a life-threatening condition in which death or permanent disability may result within the hour. Examples of these conditions are:

- Lack of heartbeat
- Lack of breathing
- Impairment of breathing
- Blow to head comparable to that of a strongly swung baseball bat
- Uncontrolled bleeding
- Coma
- Unconsciousness
- Poisoning
- Status epilepticus (long seizures)
- Crushing injury of head, chest, or abdomen
- Fractures of the long bones of the extremities
- Severe bee sting (allergy), massive hives, difficulty breathing secondary to throat swelling

**Signs and symptoms to observe and report**

Some situations may not be urgent but it is important to recognize signs and symptoms of disease and/or side effects of medication so that proper treatment may be carried out.

Choices In Community Living, Inc. expects all persons in contact with the clients to call attention to the first signs of problems noted through observations of baths, meal times and recreation periods. Some of the common symptoms to report to the Program Administrator and possible referral to the physician are listed below:

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**General Body Symptoms**

Weight loss without dieting (5 lbs)  
 Rapid weight gain (5lbs)  
 Loss of appetite  
 Increase in thirst  
 Dehydration  
 Dizziness, weakness  
 Shaking, chills  
 Frequent or severe headache  
 Swelling in any part of the body

**Vital Signs**

Temperature elevation  
 Low temperature  
 Weak, thready pulse  
 Irregular pulse  
 Fast or slow pulse  
 Shallow or deep respiration  
 Noisy respiration  
 Difficulty in breathing  
 Pain or injury

**Ears**

Discharge or bleeding  
 Pain in ear or back of ear  
 Foreign body in ear  
 Profuse hardened ear wax  
 Signs of deafness

**Nose**

Chronic discharge  
 Runny nose (not chronic)  
 Sneezing  
 Repeated nosebleeds  
 Foreign object in the nose  
 Breathing difficulties

**Eyes**

Redness of eyes or eyelids  
 Change in color, bluish or yellowish swelling  
 Discharge or bleeding  
 Profuse tearing  
 Dullness, brightness, dark circles  
 Twitching, sensitivity to light  
 Dilated or contracted pupils  
 Foreign body in the eye  
 Signs of blindness

**Mouth**

Tongue - coated, red, pale  
 Teeth - sharp, broken, loose, toothache  
 Gums - swelling, bleeding, ulcer sores that do not heal  
 Difficulty in swallowing or talking  
 Hoarseness  
 Swollen, discolored lips  
 Rash or red mouth  
 Sore throat

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**Abdomen**

Any swelling or lump in the abdomen or groin  
 Nausea or vomiting  
 Pain in the abdomen  
 Rigid abdomen

**Chest**

Chronic cough  
 Coughing up blood or pus  
 Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing  
 Pain in chest  
 Lump in breast or under the arm

**Rectum**

Hemorrhoids  
 Bleeding or drainage from rectum  
 Abnormal bowel movements (blood, mucous, worms, diarrhea, fluid)  
 Chronic constipation

**Feet**

Swelling or pain  
 Corns or bunions  
 Ingrown toenails  
 Deformities  
 Blisters

**Arms and Legs**

Swelling or pain  
 Deformities  
 Lumps, bruises  
 Paralysis or weakness  
 Varicose veins

**Neck**

Swelling or lumps in neck  
 Swelling, ulcer  
 Stiffness or pain in neck

**Skin**

Rash, moles, open sores  
 Dryness, dampness  
 Pale or reddened bruises  
 Burns  
 Unusual bites

**Genitals and Urine**

Swelling  
 Redness  
 Discharge  
 Itching  
 Abnormal color or odor of urine  
 Pain or difficulty in urination  
 Unable to void; voids frequently  
 Incontinence  
 Abrasions  
 Odor

**Mental State**

Coma or semi-comatose  
 Confusion or disorientation (unusual for client)  
 Drowsiness or stupor  
 Fatigue  
 Agitated  
 Sudden change in behavior

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**Do Not Resuscitate Orders**

Emergency Medical Response IF Client Is **Not** Under the Care of End of Life Services (such as Hospice)

When an individual appears to be having an Urgent Emergency medical situation as described on page 3-14 and 3-15, staff will immediately take all reasonable steps to obtain emergency medical assistance and to preserve the individual’s life until the individual is under the direction or care of proper medical authorities.

Staff Response IF Client **IS** under the care of End of Life Services (such as Hospice) but still living at home

It is the policy of Choices In Community Living to take all reasonable steps needed to preserve the life and safety of individuals receiving services. If CICL is provided a written, current and legal DNR Comfort Care directive or a DNR Comfort Care-Arrest directive, this information will be maintained by CICL in permanent record and at the place of residence.

- All DNR orders will include the protocol for DNR Comfort Care or DNR Comfort Care-Arrest per Ohio Administrative Code/Ohio Department of Health Rule 3701-62-04 and 3705-62-05. (see attached).
- The DNR directive and CICL’s policy regarding DNR orders will be reviewed and documented with the individual, the individual’s family and guardian, CICL’s Delegating Nurse, the county board Service and Support Administrator, and CICL staff.
- The individual’s ISP should be revised to reflect the DNR order
- CICL staff will be given written, simplified, and clear protocol to follow regarding the DNR order by the qualified End of Life Service provider (such as Hospice). These protocols will identify the actions CICL staff should implement. The protocol should instruct staff to contact the End of Life provider immediately when the individual begins to experience urgent medical issues, cardiac, or respiratory arrest to obtain their assistance.