

Kittitas County Prehospital EMS Protocols

SUBJECT: PENETRATING TRAUMA FROM TASER WEAPONS

Unlike other forms of penetrating foreign bodies, Taser Weapon barbed darts, because of their short length (1/4 in.), may be safely removed by EMS personnel when requested by law enforcement.

General

- A. The darts should only be removed in the field if they do not involve the eye, face, neck, breast, and groin. Patients with retained darts in these areas should be transported to a hospital to have them removed by a physician.
- B. The individual must be in police custody and EMS personnel must be convinced that the patient is adequately restrained.
- C. Gloves must be worn.
- D. Ensure that wires are disconnected from the device or the wires have been cut.
- E. Push on the body part which the barbed dart is imbedded and simultaneously pull the dart straight out. Examine the dart to ensure that it is completely intact and no pieces are left behind.
- F. Apply alcohol or iodine to the puncture area and dress as needed.
- G. Treat the dart as a "contaminated sharp". The darts should be placed in a biohazard sharps container and turned over to law enforcement. Consult law enforcement present for proper packaging for evidence preservation.
- H. All patients must be thoroughly assessed to determine if other medical problems or injuries are present.
- I. If the individual does not have any other presenting injury/illness, they may be left in the custody/care of law enforcement.
- J. If transported to the hospital, follow the Patient Care Protocol regarding restraints for aggressive or violent patients.