

## About Your Ambulance Call

09/09

Your MedStar ambulance crew is providing this brochure because we are concerned about your health and safety. Please review this guide for information and advice regarding your condition or injury.

The assessment and treatment given to you may not provide all of the medical care required for your condition. Additional treatment at a hospital or by a doctor may be necessary to ensure your health and recovery. Get needed medical attention as soon as possible.

The advice and instructions contained in this brochure are not a substitute for definitive and comprehensive treatment. When needed, we encourage you to seek additional help by contacting your doctor or medical facility, going to the emergency room or contacting the ambulance again by calling 9-1-1.

If appropriate, inform your doctor that MedStar was called and provide the information the ambulance crew recorded on this brochure.

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Notes by crew:**

Breathing Difficulty



## Managing Care After Injury or Illness



# Breathing Difficulty

*Breathing difficulty is explained as a sense of breathlessness or a sensation of difficult or uncomfortable breathing. Your ambulance crew evaluated your respiratory rate, breath sounds, pulse oximetry and capnography.*

*Breathing difficulty can have many causes and further evaluation of the cause may be needed.*

## Respiratory Rate

Respiratory rate is determined by watching the number of breaths an individual takes over one minute and usually occurs while the individual is at rest.

## Breath Sounds

Breath sounds are listened to by using a stethoscope and listening to the sounds made during breathing in and out.

## Pulse Oximetry

Pulse oximetry is a non-invasive method of monitoring of the amount of oxygen in a patient's red blood cells. This monitoring is done by placing a sensor on a thin part of the patient's body such as a fingertip or earlobe.

## Capnography

Capnography is used to monitor of the amount of carbon dioxide in the respiratory gases. This tool is used for the early detection of adverse respiratory events such as hypoventilation and life threatening conditions.

## What To Watch For

**If you have decided not to be transported by MedStar to a medical facility, contact your doctor or seek other medical help if any of the following develop:**

- Chest discomfort
- Shortness of breath after only slight activity or while at rest
- Wheezing
- Tightness in the throat or a “barking” cough
- Development of a fever or significant cough
- Coughing up blood
- Blue skin color

## Consider These Actions

- Make certain that you are not alone and that you are observed by a competent friend or family member for at least the next few hours or longer.
- Avoid over-strenuous activity and do not engage in an emotionally stressful situation until you have received medical care from a doctor for your condition.
- Avoid dust, pollen and other allergens.
- Take medications/inhalers as prescribed.
- **If needed, seek additional help by contacting your doctor or medical facility, going to the hospital emergency room or contact the ambulance again by calling 9-1-1.**