



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
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MEMORANDUM

TO: MA Licensed Ambulance Services  
CC: EMCAB Members  
FROM: Jon Burstein, State EMS Medical Director  
Abdullah Rehayem, Director  
DATE: September 1, 2011  
RE: Drug Supply Shortages: Diazepam/Lorazepam and Magnesium Sulfate

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1. **Diazepam/Lorazepam:** Currently, the Department of Public Health (Department)/Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) is aware of a shortage of diazepam and lorazepam. If diazepam or lorazepam are not available, midazolam may be used as an alternative to treat seizures.

For protocol **3.9 seizures** in the adult, “midazolam 2.5- 5 mg by any appropriate route” may substitute for the other benzodiazepines in the ALS-Paramedic standing orders, and further doses may be ordered by medical control.

For protocol **5.7 pediatric seizures**, “midazolam 0.05 mg./kg. to max 4 mg. by any appropriate route” may substitute for the other benzodiazepines in the ALS-Paramedic standing orders, and further doses may be ordered by medical control.

2. **Magnesium Sulfate:** Currently, the Department’s OEMS is aware of a nationwide shortage of magnesium sulfate. In circumstances where magnesium sulfate might be used, contact medical control for alternative therapeutic options.

If you have any further questions about these issues, please contact Patricia Reilly, RN, OEMS Clinical Coordinator, or Jon Burstein, MD, preferably by email, at [patricia.reilly@state.ma.us](mailto:patricia.reilly@state.ma.us) or [jon.burstein@state.ma.us](mailto:jon.burstein@state.ma.us).