

May 25, 1978

MEMORANDUM

TO: George Pelletier, Jr.

FROM: Louis C. Jordan, P.A.

RE: Air splints

This memo is in reference to your request for comments regarding air splints.

The use of talcum powder on air splints is widespread. This substance is used to prevent the splints from sticking together after they are washed. In the specific instance in question, the wound, an open fracture, had not been properly treated prior to the application of the splint. All open wounds are to be covered with a sterile dressing prior to splinting. This would have protected the wound from contamination.

However, in order to prevent a recurrence of this problem, it would be wise to notify field care personnel that the same protection of the air splints can be afforded by placing paper towels or pieces of cloth inside the splint after washing. This material could be marked as well to indicate the size and type splint for rapid identification in the field.

When opening the splint for application, the paper or cloth could be discarded, leaving no contaminants inside the splint. Talcum powder should not be used to make the splint easier to apply, due to its potential for wound contamination.

I would appreciate this information being passed on to all field personnel, perhaps via the EMS Newsletter.

LCJ/aa



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May 18, 1978

MEMORANDUM

TO: George Pelletier

FROM: George Atkinson *George Atkinson*

SUBJECT: Howard County Transport on May 17, 1978

At approximately 11:00 a.m. on May 17, 1978 MIEMS received a patient transported from Route 40 and St. Johns Lane in Howard County. On this patient there were three air splints. When the orthopedic surgeon, Dr. Ciatola, removed the splints, he noticed that there was a white powdery substance on the splint and on the open fracture wound of the patient. Also present in the operating room was Dr. Myers, our team physician, and he observed the same substance on the wound.

Both physicians have asked me to request that in the future ambulance companies refrain from placing any type of substance on the air splints. The reason this request is being made is that they feel infection is more likely to occur on open wounds that have been covered with a foreign substance and then covered with an air splint.

Would you please pass this information on to Howard County Central Alarm? It is our understanding that Howard County ambulances #25 and #85 were on the scene of this accident.

Thank you for your cooperation.

GJA:me

cc: Roy Myers, M.D.
John Stafford, M.D.
Richard L. Neat