

Tri-State Ambulance implements new Cardiac Alert protocol

A new advancement in the EMS system was recently announced by Tri-State Ambulance and Gundersen Lutheran. Under the new “Cardiac Alert” protocol, Tri-State Ambulance personnel will notify Gundersen Lutheran about heart attack patients in the field who meet certain criteria so that a specialized Cardiac Catheterization Team can be activated early while the patient is being transported to the hospital. The patients would be expeditiously evaluated in the Emergency Department and then taken directly to the Cardiac Catheterization Lab.

“The goal of the Cardiac Alert protocol is to reduce the time from symptom onset to arrival at the Cardiac Catheterization Lab at Gundersen Lutheran,” says Matt Zavadsky, Tri-State Ambulance. “Gundersen Lutheran’s Priority One Heart Attack protocol is already a national leader in heart care. The addition of this Cardiac Alert protocol will dramatically improve cardiac care in our community.”

“Having highly trained paramedics make this determination in the field saves precious time,” says Eric Wilsey Voter, MD, FACEP, Tri-State Ambulance medical director. “It is a nice compliment to Tri-State’s personnel and their assessment capabilities.”

According to cardiologist Kevin Jaeger, MD, Cardiac Alert is a nice addition to the Priority One Heart Attack program at Gundersen Lutheran. “It makes sense to have qualified EMS personnel evaluating patients immediately and ultimately saving time and heart muscle.”

The Priority One Heart Attack program was one of the first of its kind in the country. “It removes time barriers that occasionally exist in getting heart attack patients’ blocked arteries open as quickly as possible,” adds Dr. Jaeger. “Time is crucial during a heart attack. The faster we can get the blocked artery open, the less damage is done to the heart muscle.”