

Less Than Lethal Force Resources

Pepper Spray (oleoresin capsicum)

- Law enforcement officers in Alberta may use pepper spray, or oleoresin capsicum (OC), a less than lethal force option
- OC is a lachrymatory agent that irritates the eyes and upper respiratory tract causing pain, tearing, temporary blindness, coughing, and difficulty breathing; it is delivered as an aerosol spray
- The effects of OC cannot be completely neutralized, though the effects can be minimized
- Decontaminate the patient in a well-ventilated area while wearing adequate PPE to avoid becoming affected; to decontaminate the patient:
 - Remove any contaminated clothing
 - Flush with large quantities of normal saline or water for 20 minutes; wash with soap and water, if available
- Provide supportive care and treat any presenting conditions in accordance with the appropriate protocol

Conducted Energy Weapons (CEW)

- Law enforcement officers in Alberta may use a CEW, or Taser®, a less than lethal force option; the CEW fires two darts that must both embed in the body in order to deliver electrical stimuli
- The electrical stimuli interfere with the body's nervous system; they induce a forced contraction in the skeletal muscles causing the target to temporarily lose control of his/her body
- Monitor the patient for 15 minutes after deployment of a CEW for the presence or development of any arrhythmias and complete a 12-lead ECG if possible
- Remove darts from the patient:
 - Ensure that the CEW is no longer delivering electrical stimuli
 - Cut the wire at the base of each dart to disconnect from the CEW
 - Remove each dart with a quick, firm pull perpendicular to the skin; dispose in a sharps container
 - Clean each dart wound with an alcohol pad
 - Apply Band-Aid or other sterile dressing; inform the patient and law enforcement officers that this may be removed in 24 – 48 hours
 - If tetanus immunization is unknown or greater than 10 years, inform law enforcement officers that the patient requires a booster within 72 hours