



# South Plains Emergency Medical Services, Inc.

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December 24, 2024

TO: To All SPEMS Services Utilizing Dr. Addington as Medical Director

SUBJECT: TEMPORARY MEDICATION VARIANCE: EXPIRATION DATE EXTENSION

Nationwide, healthcare facilities and prehospital providers are experiencing a shortage of **0.9% sodium chloride solution** ("NS"), **Lactated Ringer's solution** ("LR"), and **10% dextrose solution** ("D<sub>10</sub>W") after severe weather-related damage to a Baxter Healthcare manufacturing facility in 2024.

The Baxter Healthcare Corporation released an FDA-approved authorization on October 28, 2024 that extends the expiration date of their 0.9% sodium chloride solution in 250 mL, 500 mL, and 1000 mL bags. The extension also applies to their Lactated Ringer's solution in 250 mL, 500 mL, and 1000 mL bags and 10% dextrose solution in 250 mL and 500 mL bags. This variance allows all agencies authorized under these protocols to maintain and use these solutions that have exceeded their printed expiration date by **six months**.

As an example: If the solution shows an expiration date of December 2024 (12/2024), it may be used through June 30, 2025.

As expected with standard medication safety practices, providers will not use medication that is discolored, appears cloudy, or has been known to be improperly stored. No medication should be used if the packaging or container/bag itself has been compromised. All solutions must remain in their original outer protective packaging until time of use.

Additionally, an Intermittent Needle Therapy (Saline Lock) can be utilized for any IV establishment that does not require fluid administration for all algorithms indicating the establishment of a TKO IV.

Each EMS and ALS first responder organization must keep a copy of this variance within their protocol book or a digital copy that is readily available for reference. This variance will be discontinued once a reliable supply of 0.9% sodium chloride solution, Lactated Ringer's solution, and 10% dextrose solution has been restored and made available to EMS and ALS first responder agencies authorized under these protocols.

Please contact the SPEMS office with any questions regarding this variance.

Charles E. Addington II, D.O.  
Medical Director