

UHMS Position Statement

Safety Timeout and Pause “STOP”

The Safety Committee of the Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society recommends that a Safety Time Out / Pause (STOP) be performed prior to the start of every hyperbaric treatment. A STOP should be completed regardless of multiplace or monoplace operations. A STOP will be performed in order to be compliant with safety goals, to combat complacency, and document completion of our unique safety practices. We recommend that the STOP be modeled after the timeouts performed before surgical procedures.

The Practice of Hyperbaric medicine is a procedure-oriented specialty, each patient should have two identifiers verified and the patient should agree to the procedure. For the safety of patients and staff, we strongly encourage documentation of a STOP verifying the “Right patient, Right Treatment and Right Safety”. The STOP should include checking the patient ground (monoplace) and that all prohibited items are removed from the chamber (both monoplace and multiplace). The treatment profile and staffing plan should be confirmed and the completed STOP checklist dated and signed or initialed by two staff members prior to closing the door of the chamber.

The society recommends that each hyperbaric facility and institution develop and implement a Safety Timeout and Pause (STOP) protocol with these basic elements. A more detailed protocol may be in order depending the specific needs of the facility.

Ref: The Joint Commission, Standards, National Patient Safety Goal, Universal Protocol, accessed 4-12-2014: http://www.jointcommission.org/standards_information/up.aspx

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