**CARE PATH Symptoms of Shortness of Breath (SOB)**

**Symptoms of Shortness of Breath**
- Difficult or labored breathing that is out of proportion to the resident’s level of physical activity
- New complaint of SOB

**Take Vital Signs**
- Temperature
- BP, pulse, apical HR (if pulse irregular)
- Respirations
- Oxygen saturation
- Finger stick glucose (diabetics)

**Vital Sign Criteria (any met?)**
- Temp > 100.5°F
- Apical heart rate > 100 or < 50
- Respiratory rate > 28/min or < 10/min
- BP < 90 or > 200 systolic
- Oxygen saturation < 90%
- Finger stick glucose < 70 or > 300
- Accessory muscle breathing
- Cyanosis
- New or worsening chest pains

**Evaluate Symptoms and Signs for Immediate Notification**
- Cough with or without sputum production
- Abnormal lung sounds (wheezing, rales, rhonchi, etc…)
- Edema
- Change in mental status
- Inability to eat or sleep due to SOB
- New irregular pulse
- Mental Status
- Cardiovascular
- Respiratory

**Consider Contacting MD/NP/PA for orders (for further evaluation and management)**
- Portable chest X-ray
- Blood work (Complete Blood Count, Basic Metabolic Panel)
- EKG (if available)
- Bedside spirometry (if available)

**Tests Ordered**
- Abnormal CXR suggestive of CHF, COPD, pneumonia, atelectasis, lung CA or pleural effusion
- WBC > 14,000 or neutrophils > 90%
- Critical values in blood count or metabolic panel
- EKG shows new changes suggestive of MI or arrhythmia

**Monitor Response**
- Vital signs criteria met
- Worsening condition and/or immediate notification criteria met

**Manage in Facility**
- Monitor vital signs and urine output every 4–8 hrs
- O2 supplementation as indicated
- Consider initiating or modifying dose of medications (e.g., diuretics, steroids, nebulizers, etc…)
- Respiratory therapy (if available)
- Ensure influenza and pneumococcal immunizations are up to date
- Encourage smoking cessation (if applicable)
- Update advance care plan and directives if appropriate

**Notify MD / NP / PA**

---

* Refer also to the INTERACT CHF and Lower Respiratory Infection Care Path
** Refer also to other INTERACT Care Paths as indicated by symptoms and signs