Avalanche Accident

Assess patient at extrication

Lethal injuries or whole body frozen
- YES: Do not start CPR
- NO:
  - Duration of burial (core temperature)1
    - ≤ 60 min (≥ 30°C): Universal ALS algorithm2
    - > 60 min (< 30°C): Minimally invasive rewarming4
  - Signs of life?3
    - YES: Minimally invasive rewarming4
    - NO: Start CPR5
      - Monitor ECG
        - Asystole: Consider termination of CPR
        - Patent airway
          - YES or UNCERTAIN: Consider serum potassium6
            - > 8 mmol L⁻¹: Hospital with ECLS
          - NO: Consider termination of CPR

1. Core temperature may substitute if duration of burial is unknown
2. Transport patients with injuries or potential complications (e.g. pulmonary oedema) to the most appropriate hospital
3. Check for spontaneous breathing and pulse for up to 1 min
4. Transport patients with cardiovascular instability or core temperature < 28°C to a hospital with ECLS (extracorporeal life support)
5. Withhold CPR if risk to the rescue team is unacceptably high
6. Crush injuries and depolarising neuromuscular blocking drugs may elevate serum potassium