



**LAKE-SUMTER EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**  
**2761 W. Old Highway 441, Suite A, Mount Dora, FL 32757**

**NEWS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**  
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**Lake-Sumter EMS Launches Life-Saving Induced Hypothermia Treatment of Heart Attack Patients**

Lake-Sumter Emergency Medical Services, in conjunction with local fire departments and area hospitals, has initiated a new life-saving treatment which will improve the chances of surviving a heart attack if you live in Lake and Sumter Counties. As of Tuesday, September 8, 2009, Lake-Sumter EMS paramedics and EMTs are using a new state-of-the-art strategy to treat heart attack patients—induced hypothermia.

This cutting edge therapy involves lowering a patient's body temperature below what is required for "proper metabolic functioning." This slows the heart rate and lowers cerebral metabolism. Decreasing metabolic activity lowers a patient's chance of neurologic injury and damage. This lessens the chance of neurological complications that occur following a cardiac arrest.

Lake-Sumter EMS medical director Dr. Paul Banerjee explains that "by cooling the body, toxins in the brain are prevented from building up and this helps limit the amount of neurologic brain injury and deficit a patient can experience when they have a cardiac arrest."

Induced hypothermia works best for patients who experience a return of spontaneous circulation—ROSC—after a cardiac arrest and are unresponsive.

Every Lake-Sumter EMS ambulance is now equipped with a special cooler that keeps the saline chilled to 4 degrees Celsius and is used in the induced hypothermia protocol. Paramedics and EMTs begin the cooling process in the field, and the patient is transferred to the hospital

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emergency department, where the ICU and ED staff continue the cooling process over a three-day period.

Dr. Banerjee states, "We are giving patients a fighting chance of surviving cardiac arrests. When patients reach the hospital where the treatment continues and their body temperature is lowered to 33 degrees Celsius, while they're maintained in an induced coma for 24 hours and then slowly brought back up over 8-12 hours."

Nationwide, about 1,000 people suffer heart attacks every day. The mortality rate for cardiac arrest patients is currently 90% which means that only 100 patients will survive. Approximately one-third of heart attack victims obtain a ROSC. Only about 10% are able to leave the hospital without any neurological damage.

According to Jim Judge, executive director of Lake-Sumter EMS, "Our goal is to increase the number of patients who walk out of the hospital post-cardiac arrest and lead normal lives. We feel we are truly on the cutting edge of medicine by instituting this protocol which is only used in a few counties in Florida and across the country."

*Lake-Sumter Emergency Medical Services, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization formed in 2000 by Lake and Sumter Counties to provide quality, community-based EMS services. The agency operates 27 Advanced Life Support units from stations located throughout both Lake and Sumter counties. Lake-Sumter EMS was honored as EMS Provider of the Year for 2008 by the State of Florida's Bureau of Emergency Medical Services and also received the National EMS Service of the Year Award for 2008. In 2009, the agency's Communications Center earned its accreditation as a Center of Excellence from the National Academies of Emergency Dispatch (NAED). The company is governed by a Board of Directors headed by Chairman Welton G. Cadwell. Jim Judge serves as Executive Director with administrative offices located at 2761 W. Old Highway 441 in Mount Dora, Florida. Contact Mr. Judge at 352-383-4554 or 352-516-1532.*

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