



# 5 TIPS for Emergency Air Ambulance Transports

**When a patient is transferred by air ambulance use a Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana (BCBSMT) participating air ambulance provider when possible.**

**Always document the following (not just a check box):**

## 1 Diagnosis meets definition of emergency

An emergency is the sudden onset or significant worsening of a medical condition that manifests itself by symptoms of sufficient severity or pain, and in the absence of immediate medical transport, could reasonably be expected by the prudent layperson to result in:

- The health of the individual being placed in serious jeopardy, or
- Serious impairment to the individual's bodily functions; or
- Serious dysfunction of the individual's bodily organs or parts



## 4 Patient must be transported to the nearest facility and if not then rationale must be given

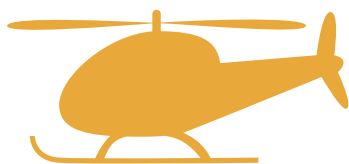
Medical records must clearly indicate why the closest facility with capabilities to care for the patient was not able to receive the patient. For example, including but not limited to:

- No provider to accept or unable to reach provider at the closest capable receiving facility
- Closest receiving facility is on divert, refuses to receive patient, and/or recommends to transfer to a different facility.

**Note:** provider convenience, preference, and familiarity to a facility and services at a particular institution are not acceptable rationale.



## 2 Ground transportation would be medically contraindicated



Document why ground ambulance is unable to provide the service. (i.e. lack of equipment and/or supplies needed to care for patient, lack of qualified personnel to deal with potential complications and/or availability.)

## 5 Air transport must be at least 30 minutes shorter in duration than ground transport

Air transportation should be considered appropriate in cases where it would take a ground ambulance 30-60 minutes or more to transport a patient whose medical condition at the time of pick-up required immediate and rapid transport due to the nature and/or severity of the patient's illness and/or injury.



## 3 When a patient is transferred by air ambulance use an in network provider when possible

We urge you to transport our members via in-network air ambulance providers whenever possible, to avoid potential balance billing.



**Disclaimer:** This content is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. This is not a guarantee of payment. Payment is based on the member's eligibility and benefits at the time of the services and BCBSMT Medical Policy.

This is intended for coverage determination pursuant to BCBSMT Medical Policy -Policy number ADM1001.005