

POLICY & PROCEDURE



TITLE: Pulse				
Scope/Purpose: To create a standard process for accurate heart rate measurement. Also, to determine the rate and quality of the pulse, and determine sufficient cardiac output.				
Division/Department: All HealthPOiNT Clinics			Policy/Procedure #:	
Original Date:			Replacement for:	
Date Reviewed:	Date Revised:	Implementation:	CPIC Approved:	Board Approved:
	9/20/2013		12/05/2013	
Responsible Party: Director Clinical Quality				

DEFINITIONS:

The pulse is a wave of blood created by the contraction of the left ventricle of the heart.
The pulse rate (heart rate) is the number of times the heart beats per minute.

POLICY:

All HealthPOiNT employees will conduct a pulse (heart rate) check on all patients at each clinic visit.

PROCEDURE:

A. Guidelines

Pulse can be assessed by palpation (feeling) or auscultation (hearing). Pulse ranges vary by age: Newborn range 80-180, child range 75-120 and adult range 60-100.

B. Procedural Guidelines for Radial Pulse

1. Assist patient into position of comfort with arm and hand supported.
2. Locate the radial pulse by placing the tips of your first three fingers on the thumb side of the patient's wrist. Do not use your thumb.
3. Exert slight pressure until you can feel the pulse. Do not press hard.
4. Look at the second hand on a watch or clock.
5. Count pulse for 1 full minute (60 seconds) to ensure accuracy.
6. Note rate and rhythm.
7. Document pulse rate in the electronic medical record under vital signs.

8. Report to Nurse or Provider any pulse rates less than 60, greater than 100 or irregular in rhythm.

C. Procedural guidelines for Apical Pulse

1. Expose patient's chest as necessary.
2. Place stethoscope against patient's chest, on left and middle moving until heart sounds are audible.
3. Count the pulse rate for 60 seconds to ensure accuracy.
4. Provide for patient's comfort, assist to redress.
5. Document the pulse rate in the electronic medical record under vital signs page.
6. Report to Nurse or Provider pulse rates less than 60, greater than 100 or irregular in rhythm.

RELATED POLICY:

REFERENCES:

Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services, 2013
Florida Community Health Centers, Inc., June 2012
American heart Association

REQUIRED BY:

ATTACHMENTS/ENCLOSURES:

POLICY/PROCEDURE TRACKING FORM (to be added as last page of each P&P for documentation of changes)

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12/05/2013		Updated to new format		