

Checklist: Counting the Radial Pulse

Counting the Radial Pulse	Able to Perform	Unable to Perform
1. Perform hand hygiene and identify the patient according to facility policy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Explain the procedure and provide privacy as appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Place the patient in a comfortable position. The palm of the hand should be facing down and the arm should rest on a flat surface. Observe the patient for signs of distress, dizziness, pain, or shortness of breath during assessment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Locate the pulse on the thumb side of the wrist with the tips of your first two or three fingers. Do not use your thumb—it contains a pulse that may be confused with the patient's pulse. Use gentle pressure when palpating the pulse.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When the pulse is felt, exert slight pressure. Using the second hand of your watch, count for one minute. It is the practice in some hospitals to count for 30 seconds and multiply by two and to record the rate for one minute. Observe whether the pulse is regular or irregular and note pulse strength according to facility policy. A one-minute count is preferred and must be done if the pulse is irregular.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Remember the pulse when counting respirations. Record the pulse on your pad as soon as possible. Report abnormal pulse rates, irregular rhythms, or changes from baseline according to facility policy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Perform hand hygiene after completing care.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>