

ADULT VITAL SIGNS

Vital Sign	Normal Range	How To Take It	Abnormal Findings	
 Blood Pressure	Systolic between 90-120 mmHg Diastolic between 60-80 mmHg	<p>You take blood pressure with a blood pressure cuff. The cuff can go on any extremity unless the client has a dialysis graft or a mastectomy. You measure the blood pressure cuff by wrapping it around the client's arm and making sure it wraps within the range given on the cuff.</p> <p>(https://youtu.be/Zmdy7W7GSAc)</p> <p>You then line up the artery line on the cuff with where the artery is on the extremity. Using a stethoscope, place the bell slightly underneath the cuff on the line of the artery. Increase the pressure of the cuff till you no longer hear the heartbeat through your stethoscope. Then slowly release the pressure on the cuff. You note the number on the sphygmomanometer when the heartbeat is heard for the first time (systolic pressure) and the last time it is heard (diastolic). The numbers are written as systolic/diastolic.</p>	Acute hypertension can be (most commonly) caused by pain, heart failure, volume overload, kidney failure, allergic reactions, neurological injuries, activity/exertion, etc.	
 Heart Rate	60 - 100 beats per minute	<p>Place the stethoscope apically over the heart. This is the 5th intercostal space, midclavicular line. Count the beats for one full minute.</p> <p>Alternatively you can palpate a radial pulse rate for 30 seconds and multiply by two.</p>	Acute tachycardia (>100 bpm) can be (most commonly) caused by fear, pain, cardiac arrhythmia, hypovolemia, fever, activity/exertion, etc.	Acute bradycardia (<60 bpm) can be (most commonly) caused by cardiac arrhythmia, coronary artery disease, infection, electrolyte imbalance, etc.
 Respirations	12 - 20 breaths per minute	<p>Watch the patients chest rise and fall and count each time for one full minute.</p> <p>Alternatively you could listen with a stethoscope for a minute.</p>	Tachypnea (>20 bpm) can be (most commonly) caused by fear, pain, asthma, throat swelling, pneumonia, fever, brain stem injury, etc.	Bradypnea (<12 bpm) can be (most commonly) caused by brain stem injury, neurologic injury, opioid overdose, incorrect ventilator settings, etc.

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 Temperature	97.8° - 99.1° Fahrenheit	Using a thermometer, you place the probe under the tongue, under the axilla, or in the rectum. The thermometer either reads the temperature in Celsius or Fahrenheit. If using the axillary route, add one degree Fahrenheit. To convert from Fahrenheit to Celsius you subtract 32 then multiply by 5 and lastly divide by 9. To convert from Celsius to Fahrenheit you multiply by 9, divide by 5 and lastly add 32.	Hyperthermia can be (most commonly) caused by infection, neurological injury, heat exhaustion, hyperthyroidism, malignant tumor, inflammation, extreme heat exposure, etc. Hypothermia can be (most commonly) caused by diabetes, hypothyroidism, drug/alcohol abuse/use, prolonged exposure to cold environments, etc.
 Pain	0-10	This is a subjective question that you ask the patient. "Rate your pain on a scale of 0 - 10, zero being no pain at all and ten being the worst pain imaginable." Remember to also gather PQRST or OLDCARTS details with your pain assessment. There's more to it than just the pain score!	Pain can be acute or chronic, depending on the cause. There are many, many possible reasons for pain. No amount of pain is considered normal - it is an indication that something is wrong.