Health ONE EMS
Emergency Medical Services

Vital Signs and SAMPLE History

Baseline Vital Signs • Pulse • Respirations • Skin • Pupils • Blood Pressure	
Pulse Rate • Adults generally 60-100/minute • Tachycardia is pulse more than 100/minute • Bradycardia is pulse less than 60/minute *More than 120 or less than 50 may be a critical finding*	
Pulse Quality • Strong or weak • Regular or irregular	
Respiratory Quality • Normal • Shallow • Labored • Noisy	
Abnormal Skin Colors • Pale • Cyanotic • Flushed • Jaundiced	

Abnormal Skin Temperature

- Hot
- Cool
- Cold

Abnormal Skin Condition

- Wet
- Very dry

Pupils

- Size
  - Dilated
  - Constricted
- Equality
- Reactivity
  - To light
  - Nonreactive (fixed)

Blood Pressure

Blood pressure is described as:

$$\frac{\text{Systolic}}{\text{Diastolic}} \text{ or } \frac{120}{80}$$

Pulse Oximetry

- Measures oxygen circulating in the blood
- 96-100% considered normal

Pulse Oximetry Precautions

- Not accurate in shock or hypothermia
- False readings in carbon monoxide poisoning
- Movement and nail polish can cause inaccurate readings

- Batteries must be in good condition
- **NOTE: do not withhold oxygen from a patient who may need it because the oximeter reads "normal"**

Reassessment of Vital Signs

- Stable patient (every 15 minutes)
- Unstable patient (every 5 minutes)

SAMPLE History

S = Signs and symptoms
A = Allergies
M = Medications
P = Pertinent past history
L = Last oral intake
E = Events leading to injury or illness

Signs and Symptoms

Signs: smell, seen, feel, hear
Symptoms: cannot observe – patient tells you

Allergies

- To medications
- To foods
- To environment

Medications

Prescription & Non-prescription

- Current
- Recent
- Birth control pills

Events Leading to Illness or Injury

Sequence of events that led to illness or injury

Interview Strategies

- Position yourself appropriately
- Identify yourself
- Speak in a normal voice
- Use your patient's name

Review Questions

- List the five vital signs an EMT should record.
- What characteristics should you look for when evaluating:
  - Pulse
  - Respirations
  - Skin
- Explain how to get a SAMPLE history.
- How often should you reevaluate vital signs?

Street Scenes

- What is your primary concern for this patient?
- What vital signs should be taken even if a no transport decision is being considered?
- If given the opportunity, what should the patient history include?
- What other patient history information should be obtained?
- Should you take another set of vital signs?
- How might you get the patient to rethink her decision not to be transported?