
Forsyth County EMS

Skill Procedure: Orthostatic Blood Pressure Measurement

	MR / EMT	
	Expanded Scope EMT	
	EMT-I	
	EMT-P	

Clinical Indications:

- A. Syncope or Near Syncope
- B. Profuse diaphoresis
- C. Dizziness or Borderline Hypotension.
- D. Unexplained Tachycardia
- E. Greater than 1 episode of vomiting or diarrhea in last 48 hours.
- F. Any “Abnormal Appearance”

II. Procedure:

- A. Assess the need for orthostatic measurement.
- B. Obtain patient’s pulse and blood pressure while supine.
- C. Have patient rapidly sit upright with feet at same level as when supine. Have cuff inflated to supine systolic pressure.
- D. Obtain patient’s pulse and blood pressure while sitting after one minute.
- E. Repeat procedure for standing position.
- F. If pulse has increased by 20 BPM **or** systolic blood pressure decreased by 20 mmHg, or the patient complains of symptoms, the orthostatics are considered positive.
- G. If positive orthostatic changes occur while sitting, **DO NOT** continue to the standing position.
- H. Document the time and vital signs for each position measured on the patient care report (PCR).
- I. Determine appropriate treatment based on protocol.
- J. All patients that meet the criteria or Orthostatic Measurement that refuse transport must have a standing assessment performed initially and repeated after one minute standing.

III. Certification Requirements:

Maintain knowledge of the indications, contraindications, technique, and possible complications of the procedure. Assessment of this knowledge may be accomplished via quality assurance mechanisms, classroom demonstrations, skills stations, or other mechanisms as deemed appropriate by the local EMS System. Assessment should include direct observation at least once per certification cycle.

Approved by:
Dr. R.L. Alson
Medical Director
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