

Competency Assessment (Lab Skill)

Nursing Assistant Procedure: Taking blood pressure (Two-step method)

Task: To take blood pressure using the two-step method in a clinical setting simulation

Standards: Perform the task within 5 minute(s) with a minimum score of 40 points.

#	Steps	Possible Points	Points Earned	Comments
1	Wash Hands	3		
2	Assemble equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sphygmomanometer with approximate size cuff• Stethoscope• Alcohol wipes	2		
3	Call patient and identify patient using two patient identifiers. Introduce self and title	3		
4	Remove the patient's arm from sleeve or roll the sleeve 5 inches above the elbow; it should not be tight or binding.	2		
5	Locate the brachial artery with your fingertips.	2		
6	Place the patient's arm palm upward, supported on the bed or table, at heart level.	2		
7	Wrap the cuff smoothly and snugly around the arm. Center the bladder over the brachial artery. The bottom of the cuff should be one inch above the antecubital space (inner elbow). The clothing should not come into contact with the cuff or stethoscope.	3		
8	Place the bulb in your dominant hand and feel for the radial pulse with the fingers of your other hand. To find out how high to pump the cuff <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rapidly inflate the cuff until you no longer feel the radial pulse.• Add 30 mm to the reading. For example, if you no longer feel the pulse when the mercury or needle reaches 130, add 30 mm for a reading of 160). Note that point.	5		

9	Quickly and steadily deflate the cuff. Wait 15 to 30 seconds.	2		
10	Place the stethoscope over the brachial artery.	2		
11	Re-inflate the cuff quickly and steadily to the level you calculated.	2		
12	Release the air at an even pace, about 2 or 3 mm per second. Keep your eyes on the needle or the mercury.	3		
13	Listen for the onset of at least two consecutive beats. Note where the needle is on the sphygmomanometer when you first hear the sound (Do not stop deflating the cuff), this is your systolic reading.	5		
14	Continue deflating the cuff. The last sound you hear is the diastolic reading. Continue to deflate and to listen for 10 to 20 mm or more to make sure you have the correct diastolic reading.	5		
15	Record the reading (blood pressure is always recorded in even numbers, with the systolic on top and the diastolic on the bottom; e.g., 128/82). Indicate the arm used and the patient's position (sitting, lying down, or standing).	4		
16	If you are not sure of the reading and need to retake the blood pressure, wait 1 to 2 minutes before repeating the procedure.	1		
17	Clean the earpieces of the stethoscope with alcohol wipes. If the tubing has contacted the patient or linen, wipe it as well.	2		
18	Return equipment to the appropriate area.	1		
19	Carry out ending procedure actions.	1		
Student Total Points				
Points Possible		50		
Final Score (Student's Total Points/Possible Points)				