



Amherst Fire District Procedure

Temperature Measurement

Clinical Indications:

- Monitoring body temperature in a patient with suspected infection, hypothermia, hyperthermia, or to assist in evaluating resuscitation efforts.

Procedure:

1. If clinically appropriate, allow the patient to reach equilibrium with the surrounding environment. For example, the temperature of a child or infant that has been heavily bundled is often inaccurate, so “unbundle” the child for 3 to 5 minutes before obtaining temperature.
2. For adult patients that are conscious, cooperative, and in no respiratory distress, an oral temperature is preferred. For infants or adults that do not meet the criteria above, a rectal temperature is preferred.
3. To obtain an oral temperature, ensure the patient has no significant oral trauma and place the thermometer under the patient’s tongue with appropriate device specific covering.
4. Have the patient seal their mouth closed around thermometer.
 - **Using an electronic thermometer:**
 - Select and connect the correct probe that you will need to the device; (Blue-oral/axillary, Red-rectal)
 - Remove the probe from its storage port which automatically turns on the device and performs a self-test.
 - Select “C” centigrade or “F” Fahrenheit for the reading you wish.
 - Select the method for which you will be obtaining the reading; (oral, axillary, rectal).
 - Cover the probe with a device specific covering.
 - Leave the device in place until there is indication an accurate temperature has been recorded (i.e. beep or other indicator specific to the device). If using a traditional thermometer, leave it in place until there is no change in the reading for at least 30 seconds (usually 2 to 3 minutes). Proceed to step 9.
 - **Using a tympanic thermometer:**
 - Cover the sensor with a device specific covering which will turn the unit on.
 - Leave the device in place until there is indication an accurate temperature has been recorded (per the “beep” or other indicator specific to the device).
 - Removing the probe cover will automatically turn the unit off.
5. When obtaining a rectal temperature assess whether the patient has suffered any rectal trauma by history and/or examination as appropriate for patient’s complaint.
7. Cover the thermometer with an appropriate sterile cover, apply lubricant and insert into the rectum no more than 1 to 2 cm beyond the external anal sphincter.

Certification Requirements:

- Successfully complete an annual skill evaluation inclusive of the indications, contraindications, technique, and the possible complications of the procedure.