

Patient Assessment: VITAL SIGNS



TEMPERATURE

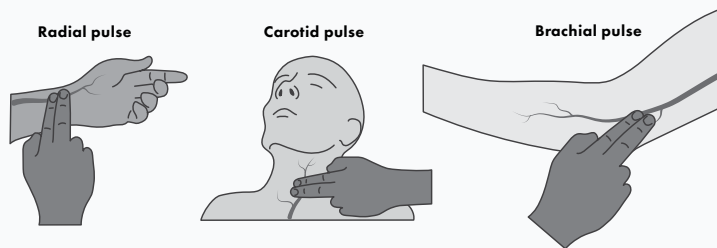
Method	Location	Baseline
Axillary	armpit	97.6°F (36.5°C)
Oral	under tongue	98.6°F (37.0°C)
Rectal	rectum	99.6°F (37.5°C)
Temporal artery	forehead	99.6°F (37.5°C)
Tympanic membrane	inside ear	98.6°F (37.0°C)

HEART RATE

Heart rate (HR): number of times the heart beats per minute, measured in beats per minute (bpm)

- ▶ tachycardia: HR too fast
- ▶ bradycardia: HR too slow
- ▶ regular: equal time between contractions
- ▶ irregular: changes in time between beats
- ▶ bounding: stronger than normal
- ▶ thready: weaker than normal

Age	Normal bpm
Adults and adolescents	60 – 100
Children (2 – 10 years)	60 – 140
Infants and toddlers	100 – 190
Newborns (< 3 months)	85 – 205



OXYGEN SATURATION

Oxygen saturation (SpO₂): the percentage of red blood cells that are carrying oxygen

Reading	Assessment
96% – 100%	normal
91% – 95%	mild hypoxia
85% – 90%	moderate hypoxia
Less than 85%	severe hypoxia

RESPIRATORY RATE

Respiratory rate (RR): number of breaths taken per minute, measured in breaths per minute

Age	Normal Breaths per Minute
Adult and adolescents	12 – 20
Child (6 – 10 years)	15 – 30
Child (6 months – 5 years)	20 – 30
Infant (0 – 6 months)	25 – 40

BLOOD PRESSURE

Blood pressure (BP): the force of blood as it flows against the walls of the arteries, measured in mm Hg

→ systolic pressure
120 mm Hg
80
↳ diastolic pressure

- ▶ **systolic pressure:** pressure that occurs while the heart is contracting (in systole).
- ▶ **diastolic pressure:** pressure that occurs while the heart is relaxed (in diastole).

