Pulse assessment

1 Before watching

Which pulse sites do you know? Name at least two. What can a pulse tell a nurse?

2 Match the pulse sites

1 radial 2 carotid 3 apical 4 femoral 5 popliteal 6 dorsalis pedis

a in the groin
b on the top of the foot
c at the wrist on the thumb side
d behind the knee
e on the side of the neck
f over the apex of the heart on the left side of the chest

Answers: 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___

3 Watch and complete

Word bank: rhythm • tachycardia • strength • bradycardia • stethoscope

1 A nurse assesses pulse rate, _____ and _____.
2 In the video, an adult heart rate below 60 bpm is called _____.
3 An adult heart rate above 100 bpm is called _____.
4 The apical pulse is assessed by listening with a _____.

Now complete the range mentioned in the video: usual adult resting pulse = ____–____ bpm.

4 True or false

Write T or F. Correct each false statement orally.

1 ___ Both carotid arteries should be palpated at the same time.
2 ___ Heavy pressure should be applied when checking the carotid pulse.
3 ___ A weak, thready pulse and a full, bounding pulse describe pulse strength.
4 ___ A Doppler device can help detect a pulse that is difficult to palpate.
5 ___ Infants usually have a slower resting heart rate than adults.

5 Think and explain

1 What risk does the video mention when both carotid arteries are pressed at once?

_____

2 What is the difference between palpation and auscultation?

_____

3 Which pulse in the foot is checked behind the medial ankle bone?

_____

6 Calculate and report

For this exercise, a regular radial pulse is counted for 30 seconds. Multiply by 2.

a 36 beats in 30 seconds = _____ bpm.
b 44 beats in 30 seconds = _____ bpm.

Use result a to complete the handover: “The patient’s radial pulse is _____ beats per minute. The rhythm is regular.”

7 Speak to a patient

Patient: “What are you checking at my wrist?”
Nurse: Explain in 3–4 sentences. Ask permission and ask the patient to relax their arm.
Useful phrases: “May I…?” • “I’m checking…” • “Please relax…” • “Thank you.”