CAPILLARY PUNCTURE – SKIN PUNCTURE

PRINCIPLE:  To describe the proper technique used to perform a finger puncture.

SPECIMEN:  Not applicable.

MATERIALS:  Disposable gloves
70% isopropyl alcohol
Cotton balls
Single-use lancing device
Warming device - Moist warm towel or infant heel warmers. Use moist heat whenever possible.
Sharps container

QUALITY CONTROL:  Not applicable.

PROCEDURE:
1. Identify the patient using two identifiers.
2. Explain the procedure to the patient.
3. Assemble your equipment.
4. Wash your hands.
5. Put your gloves on.
6. Position the patient so that the finger is steady and supported in a comfortable position.
7. Select a site for the skin puncture. The fleshy surface of the distal portion of the middle or ring fingers on the non-dominant hand are preferred sites. The puncture should be halfway between the center of the ball of the finger and its side. This site should be used rather than the fleshy pad on the fingertip. However, if a finger is not a desirable site for a specific patient, that patient’s physician may designate another site to use.
8. If needed, warm the site with a warming device for 3-10 minutes. The temperature of the warming device should not exceed 40ºC/105ºF.
9. Cleanse the site with 70% Isopropyl Alcohol and allow the site to air dry.
10. Hold the finger you choose with your thumb and index finger. Grasp the patient’s finger about three inches from the tip. The puncture site should not be on the top of the finger. To utilize gravity, puncture the underside of the finger.
11. Place the lancing device across (perpendicular to) the fingerprint lines, not parallel to them. The cut should be made across the fingerprints.
12. Depress the plunger. Do not pull lancet away from site until after activation.
13. Discard the lancing device into a sharps container.
14. Depending on the test, wipe away the first drop of blood with a cotton ball or gauze square. The first drop may contain tissue fluids. The exception to this practice is when performing protime testing.
15. Turn the patient’s palm down.
16. Collect the blood into the appropriate container or onto the appropriate place.
17. Wipe the site dry and apply pressure with cotton ball or gauze square until bleeding has completely stopped.
18. Use a bandaid only if necessary, as small children may choke on them if they get them in their mouth.
19. Clean up area.
CALCULATIONS: Not applicable.

RESULTS: Not applicable.

NORMALS: Not applicable.

REFERENCES:
6. Tips for Your Fingerstips, Adam H. Bloom, M.D., University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine.

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See POC Table of Contents for documentation of Implementation, Review, Revision.