

**HACKETTSTOWN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
NURSING POLICY MANUAL
TEMPORAL ARTERY THERMOMETER (Exergen Temporal Scanner)**

Effective Date: January 26, 2016
Cross Referenced:
Reviewed Date:
Revised Date:

Policy No: 8620.TemporalArteryThermometer
Origin: Division of Nursing
Authority: Chief Nursing Officer
Page: 1 of 3

SCOPE

All clinical staff responsible for using temporal artery thermometer

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for accurate temperature measurement measure using temporal artery and to provide maintenance guideline for the temporal artery thermometer equipment.

DEFINITIONS

Temporal artery thermometer- uses infrared technology to detect the heat naturally emitting from the skin surface. The thermometer emits nothing, detects only, assuring safety for all patients.

POLICY

It is the policy of HRMC to provide safe use of the temporary artery thermometer to assure accurate patient temperature recordings.

PROCEDURE

I. General Information

- A. Temporal artery thermometers are used by trained individuals
- B. Once a temporal artery thermometer is used for a patient's temperature, the same method should be used for subsequent temperatures unless there is a change in patient's condition or site is no longer accessible.
- C. Use caps cover probehead for use in between patients
- D. Core temperature, such as the temporal artery is about a degree F (0.5°C) higher than an oral temperature, close to a rectal temperature.
- E. Low reading can occur if the lens is dirty, if you cure down the side of the face, patient is sweaty or multiple temps are taken in rapid succession on the same patient.
- F. High readings can occur if comparing a temporal artery reading with another method or if the area being measure is not fully exposed.

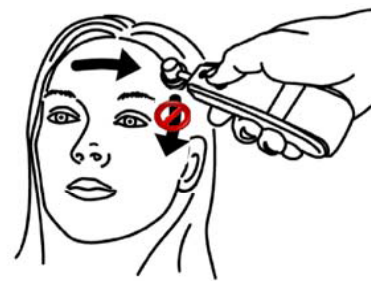
II. Procedure for Accurate temperature measurement



1 Brush hair away if covering the forehead or ear



2 Place probe **FLUSH** on forehead, depress button & **keep depressed until you are done**

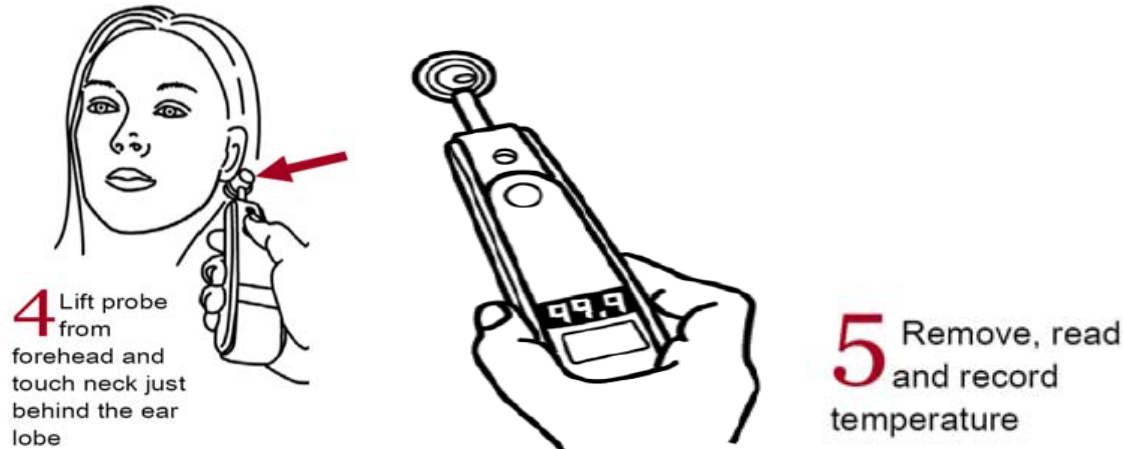


3 Slide **STRAIGHT** across forehead, **NOT** down the side of the face

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- A. Brush hair away if covering the forehead or ear
- B. Place probe FLUSH on forehead, depress button and keep depressed until you are done.
- C. Slide STRAIGHT across forehead, NOT down the side of the face.
- D. Lift probe from forehead (still keeping button depressed) and touch neck just behind the ear lobe.
- E. Remove, read and record temperature.

III. Critical Elements

- A. Take temperature measurement on the area that is exposed to the environment.
 1. Coverings such as hair, bandages, or clothing would insulate the area and cause falsely high readings.
 2. Measure only the up-side on a patient in a lateral position. The down-side will be insulated preventing the heat from dissipating, resulting in falsely high readings
 3. A fan blowing on the face, an ice pack or cold/wet compress would cause falsely low readings.
 4. Do not take multiple temps in rapid succession on the same patient; the cold probe cools the skin and skin is part of the measurement. Wait about 30 seconds before repeating a temperature on the same patient.
 5. If all sites are wet from diaphoresis
 - a) The patient' temperature will be rapidly dropping if all sites are wet and fever is not an issue. Return in about 15 minutes when the patient should be dry and take a standard temporal artery temperature.
 - b) Wiping the sweat will not work as the sweat glands secrete too quickly and the area will still show the effect of evaporative cooling.
- B. If the forehead is inaccessible because of bandages, an alternative method to obtain a patient's temperature must be used.

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IV. Cleaning and Maintenance

- A. The temporal Artery Thermometer that is dedicated to a patient room must be cleaned before use on an incoming patient, or periodically as needed.
- B. The temporal artery thermometer that is used in areas that service transient patients (ED, PACU, Ambulatory, etc.) the probe-head must be wiped with an alcohol swab between patients or used with disposable caps.
- C. A dirty probe lens can cause a low reading, and it should be cleaned on a bi-weekly basis.
- D. To clean lens: dampen the cotton tip of a stick applicator with an alcohol swab; twirl cotton tip on the lens deep in center of probe; dry the lens with a dry cotton tipped applicator.



- E. The thermometer housing can be cleaned with any hospital-approval disinfectant, alcohol, or even diluted bleach solution.
 1. Do not clean the probe head with any solution other than alcohol, as the solution may drip on the lens and cause damage.
 2. Do not submerge thermometer in solution.
- F. The message "BATT" on the display screen is an indication the battery is low.
 1. Replace the battery by unscrewing the one screw of the battery compartment, removing cover and replacing existing battery with a 9-volt alkaline battery.
 2. Replace cover and tighten screw.

V. Documentation

- A. Record temperature in the vital sign section of the Electronic Health Record
- B. Record temperature as Temporal Artery Temperature – (TA)
- C. Record two week cleaning in unit log book.

REFERENCE

www.exergen.com/tathermometry/index.htm , training materials and clinical education.

Accessed 1/19/2016

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