

Respiratory Assessment

Pulse Oximetry Tips

Assess:

- Pulse and respirations– Compare the pulse to the one on the device (it should be within 5 BPM)
- Respiratory rate, rhythm
- Other respiratory signs – observation and auscultation

Think about:

- Peripheral circulation, movement, skin colour, anemia, nail polish, strong light interference – these can give you poor results
- Should you warm their hand? Consider another site?
- Are they on oxygen? You will need to mention that in documentation of SPO2

Remember:

- If hypoxia starts it can get worse quickly
- This is one small part of your respiratory assessment
- You can start oxygen according to your oxygen policy if SPO2 is less than 90%

Hypoxemia is a below normal level of oxygen in your blood

Hypoxia is a reduced level of oxygen in the tissues

With COVID-19 people may have hypoxia without shortness of breath