I. PURPOSE

Many Point-of-Care tests require a whole blood sample that is collected by capillary puncture, or fingerstick. In order to assure patient safety and accurate Point-of-Care results, capillary blood collection must be performed uniformly and by an approved procedure.

II. ORDER

A physician’s order, standard protocol, or order by other health care professional authorized to request laboratory tests is required for Point-of-Care Testing.

III. COUNTERINDICATIONS

Conditions that may counterindicate the use of fingerstick include dehydration and poor peripheral circulation (eg. Peripheral edema). Blood must not be obtained from a swollen or previously punctured site or from fingers on the side affected by a mastectomy.

IV. PRECAUTIONS

All patients and specimens are handled according to standard safety precautions guidelines as outlined by the United States Center for Disease Control.

V. MATERIALS

• Hospital Approved lancets - must be auto-disabling, single-use and not expired, if an expiration date is present
• Alcohol preps
• Sterile gauze pads, at least two
• Disposable, non-latex gloves
• Sharps container
• Biohazard containers
• Sterile adhesive bandages

VI. PROCEDURE

A. Assemble the supplies.
B. Identify the patient using two unique identifiers. Ask the patient to state his/her name and birthdate. Verify this information against the patient’s wristband.

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C. Position the patient as needed to provide access, free blood flow to the hand and fingers, adequate support for the arm and to protect the patient from falls.

D. Wash hands and put on disposable, non-latex gloves.

E. Choose the puncture site. The lateral part of the end of the middle or ring finger palmar surface should be used.

F. The patient’s hand may be warmed if necessary by gentle rubbing or by applying a warm, moist towel to the site for 3 – 5 minutes.

G. Clean the puncture site by rubbing with an alcohol prep. Allow the site to air dry.

H. Open the puncture device within site of the patient.

I. Notify the patient of an imminent puncture.

J. Puncture the skin following the manufacturer’s instructions for the puncture device.

K. Properly dispose of the puncture device in a hospital approved sharps container.

L. Wipe away the first drop of blood, if indicated by the test procedure, with a dry, sterile gauze pad.

M. Gently squeeze the punctured finger to produce a full drop of blood. Avoid excessive pressure or massaging the finger to prevent mixing the sample blood with interstitial fluids.

N. Apply the blood to the sampling device as indicated in the applicable Point-of-Care procedure or operator’s manual.

O. Apply direct pressure to the wound site with a second, clean gauze pad and slightly elevate the extremity.

P. Continue testing as indicated in the test procedure.

VII. REFERENCES

   CLSI GP42 – A6 Vol. 24 No. 21

VIII. SPONSOR AND DEVELOPER

Sponsor:
Pathology Performance Improvement

Developer:
Point of Care Testing Office

Review Cycle: Two (2) years

IX. SIGNATURES

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>William Clarke</td>
<td>03/03/2023</td>
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<td>Medical Director of Point of Care Testing</td>
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