Adult Arterial Line Sampling

**Purpose**  
To standardize Arterial Line Sampling by Respiratory Care Service Personnel. The purpose of Arterial Line Sampling is to accurately determine or reassess the cardiac performance and ventilatory status in those patients where the clinical parameters of pulse, blood pressure, color, or urine output are insufficient as a guide to cardiac or ventilatory status.

**Scope**  
- Respiratory Care Services utilizes the blood gas results from arterial samples along with other parameters to monitor the ventilatory status of patients on ventilators.

**Accountability /Training**  
- This policy applies to all personnel functioning in a clinical capacity in Respiratory Care Service with understanding of age specific requirements of patient population.
- A Respiratory Care Service staff member under conditions described by the policy authorizing arterial line sampling may do arterial line sampling.

**Physician's Orders**  
Sampling will be done at the physician’s order or as per the specific ICU protocol. (*RT and/or RN are capable of drawing a blood gas from an arterial line.*)

**Indications**  
Arterial blood gas values may be indicated before and after the start or discontinuation of oxygen administration to the patient, after ventilator changes, and when a change in patient status has been noted.

**Goal**  
To correctly or as accurately as possible determine and report those values being monitored which reflect patient status while at the same time working to prevent infection, infarction, and exsanguination.

**Procedure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Verify Physician's Orders and Patient ID. Wash hands and wear gloves and eyeshield.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Shut off the stopcock to the solution proximal to the intra-flow between the intra-flow and the patient.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Aspirate 10 cc into a sterile or inline syringe attached to that stopcock.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Clamp off the line between the syringe/stopcock and the &quot;T&quot; piece or draw from designated inline port.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Swab the &quot;T&quot; piece with alcohol or Betadine.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Draw at least 1-3cc from the &quot;T&quot; piece or port with a sterile heparinized syringe.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Unclamp the line, and if less than 30 seconds, return the aspirate to line, insuring first that no air bubbles are being introduced into the system. To remove air bubbles, aspirate slightly, tap the syringe barrel, and allow the bubble to ascend up away from the stopcock, then return the aspirate to the system short of returning the air bubble.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Turn the stopcock open to system and flush the system briefly with solution through the intra-flow.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Properly label sample with the date, time, and conditions of ventilation, FIO₂, patient temperature and tape the blood gas tag to the sample. RT should run sample within 30min of being drawn. If RT is unavailable, the RN should place sample in appropriate basket <em>(the basket has RT pager on front)</em> and page the RT covering that area on appropriate pager so sample can be run promptly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Close off all open stopcocks with sterile syringes, tenckhoffs, or caps.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Complications of Arterial Lines

**Major**
- Local obstruction with distal ischemia
- External hemorrhage
- False aneurysm
- Dissection
- Plaque dislodgement
- Cerebral infarction (carotid artery catheter)
- Renal shut down (femoral artery catheter)
- Sepsis

**Minor**
- Pain
- Ecchymosis
- Temporary loss of pulse (arteriospasm)
- Local infarction
- Occlusion with ischemia
- Peripheral emboli

### Assessment of Outcome
This procedure will be considered effective if it meets all of the above stated goals.
**Patient Teaching**

The patient should be informed of the purpose of the procedure to relieve apprehension.

**Infection Control/Safety Precautions**

- Sterile equipment and technique will be used during set ups and change outs.
- Sterile technique will be used during care and operation around the site of insertion and at the equipment interfaces.

**Documentation**

Document as outlined in Respiratory Care Services Policy & Procedure Manual Policies # 7.1.1 and # 7.1.2.

AARC Clinical Practice Guidelines; Sampling For Arterial Blood Gas Analysis, Respiratory Care; 1992; 37:913-917

