

Fingertstick

Introduction

Drops of blood for testing can be obtained by puncturing or making an incision in the capillary bed in the dermal layer of the skin with a lancet. This procedure describes the method to obtain blood from adults and children older than 1 year under the following circumstances:

- Severely burned patients
- Obese patients
- Patients with thrombotic or clot-forming tendencies
- Elderly patients or others in whom superficial veins are very fragile, inaccessible [IV in both arms] or being saved for chemotherapy
- Point-of-care testing
- Patient is apprehensive or has an intense fear of needles

Scope

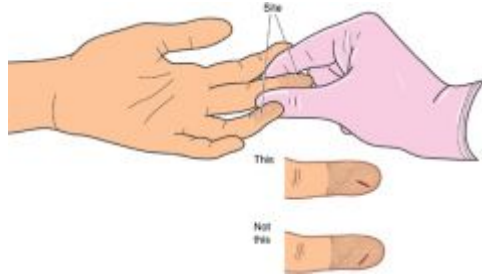
This procedure is intended for any phlebotomist or health care worker who is certified to perform fingersticks or is within their scope of practice.

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Fingertstick, Continued

Policy

- Only puncture the palmer surface of the distal or end segment of the middle or ring finger of the nondominant hand.
- The puncture site should be in the central, fleshy portion of the finger, slightly to the center and perpendicular to the grooves in the whorls [spiral pattern] of the fingerprint.



- Do not puncture fingers of infants and children less than 1 year of age.
- Do not puncture fingers on the same side as a mastectomy without written physician's permission.
- Do not puncture parallel to the grooves or lines of the fingerprint.
- Do not puncture the fifth or little [pinky] finger.
- Do not puncture the index finger.
- Do not puncture the side or the tip of the finger.
- Do not puncture the thumb.
- Only use the lancet specifically for finger puncture.
- If the first attempt at collection is unsuccessful, a different site will be used.
- Only 2 attempts at collection can be made, then a different person will make an attempt.
- Fingertstick should not be performed on infants less than 6 months of age and weighing between 6 and 20 pounds [heel puncture performed, if indicated].

Equipment

- Single use Lancet for adults or children
- Microcollection Containers
- Approved Warming Device, if needed
- Alcohol Pads
- Gauze
- Gloves
- Sharps Container

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Fingertstick, Continued

Safety Precautions Refer to your Safety Manual for general safety requirements.

Quality Control Inspect the lancet and alcohol packaging to assure sterility.

Order of Draw First – EDTA Specimens [Hematology – purple top]
Second – Other Additive Specimens [Chemistry – green top]
Third – Serum Specimens

Procedure Follow the steps below to collect a blood specimen from a finger puncture.

| Step | Action |
|------|---|
| 1 | Determine tests to be drawn. |
| 2 | Identify the patient using 2 patient identifiers. |
| 3 | Sanitize hands, put on gloves and prepare the equipment. |
| 4 | Position the patient. NOTE: The patient's arm must be supported on a firm surface with the hand extended and palm up. |
| 5 | Select the puncture site and warm the site, if applicable. NOTE: Only use approved warming device. |
| 6 | Clean the site with 70% isopropyl alcohol and air dry the site. NOTE: Do not blow on the site or wipe or wave it dry. |
| 7 | Grasp the patient's finger gently but firmly between your nondominant thumb and index finger. Reassure the patient and let them know you are about to stick their finger. |
| 8 | Place the single use lancet flat against the skin in the central fleshy pad of the finger, slightly to the side of center and perpendicular to the fingerprint whorls. |
| 9 | Puncture the site and discard the lancet in the Sharps Container. |
| 10 | Using a clean gauze square, wipe away the first drop of blood. |

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Fingertstick, Continued

Procedure, continued

| Step | Action |
|------|---|
| 11 | Fill and mix the tubes in the order of draw (Purple top is first for hematology; refer to procedure block <i>Order of Draw</i>) by positioning the site downward to enhance blood flow and apply gentle, intermittent pressure toward the site. NOTES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not squeeze, scoop, use strong repetitive pressure or “milk” the site, as hemolysis and tissue fluid contamination of the specimen can occur. • Ensure that the tubes are not under or overfilled and are mixed according to manufacturer’s instructions. |
| 12 | After the last tube is filled, place the gauze over the puncture site and apply pressure to the site. |
| 13 | Apply the label that contains the following information on the specimen tubes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient’s full name • MRN • Date and time of collection • ID of person collecting specimen |
| 14 | Check the site to verify the bleeding has stopped and apply bandage. NOTES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not use a cotton ball with micropore (paper tape) or transpore tape over a finger stick. • For pediatric patients, instruct the parent(s) to observe their child to prevent the child from putting their finger into their mouth to avoid a choking hazard from the bandage. • Ask the parent to remove the bandage after 10 minutes. |
| 15 | Dispose of used and contaminated materials into the appropriate containers. |
| 16 | Transport the specimens to the Laboratory. |

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Non-Controlled Documents

- McCall and Tankersley, Phlebotomy Essentials, 5th Edition, Lipponcott, Williams and Wilkins, 2012. Chapter 10.
 - CLSI: Procedures and Devices for the Collection of Diagnostic Capillary Blood Specimens – Approved Standard – Sixth Edition, H04-A6, Volume 28 Number 25, September 2008.
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Fingerstick

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