

**OLIVE VIEW-UCLA MEDICAL CENTER
POLICY & PROCEDURE**

**NUMBER: 1054
VERSION: 3**

SUBJECT/TITLE: **THE MODIFIED ALLEN TEST**

POLICY: The Modified Allen Test will be performed prior to radial artery puncture or cannulation.

PURPOSE: To clearly outline the steps to follow when assessing collateral circulation, using the Modified Allen Test. This procedure may be performed by registered nurse, physician or respiratory therapist trained in this procedure

DEPARTMENTS: All, Nursing, Medical, and Respiratory Services

DEFINITIONS: The Modified Allen Test assesses collateral circulation of the hand when the radial artery is occluded.

PROCEDURE: **STEPS/KEY POINTS:**

1. Wash Hands
2. Explain procedure and purpose to patient/family.
3. Select site for arterial puncture to be performed. (Preferred site is right or left radial)
4. Instruct patient to close hand tightly. If patient is unable to do this, raise the arm above heart level for several seconds.
 - **Drains blood from the extremity.**
5. Occlude patient's ulnar and radial arteries, with moderate finger pressure at the wrist, until blanching of the hand occurs.
 - **Obstructs blood flow to the hand.**
6. Ask the patient to open fist while the ulnar artery is released.
7. Examine the palm for color and refill time to determine ulnar artery patency.
 - **Refill time should be ≤ 6 seconds. Prolonged pallor indicates insufficient ulnar blood flow (collateral circulation). Select an alternate site for cannulation. With a "negative" Allen's Test, radial arterial puncture should not be done.**
8. Repeat procedure releasing radial artery as the fist is opened to assess blood flow in radial artery.

DOCUMENTATION:

SUBJECT/TITLE: THE MODIFIED ALLEN TEST

Policy Number: 1054

Page Number: 2

- Document in medical record:
 - Site and Result of the Allen’s Test.
 - Communication to other care team members of negative Allen’s Test.

References: American Association of Critical Care Nurses, McHale Wiengand, D. (2013) <u>AACN Procedure Manual for Critical Care</u> (6 th Ed.) Missouri: Elsevier. Lynn-McHale Wiegand, D. and Carlson, K. (2005). <u>AACN Procedure Manual for Critical Care</u> (5 th Ed.). Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders Co.	
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