



## Respirations

### Quicksheet

1. Perform hand hygiene.
2. Verify correct patient using two identifiers.
3. Draw curtain around bed or close door.
4. Ensure patient's chest is visible. If necessary, move bed linen or gown.
5. Place patient's arm in relaxed position across the abdomen or lower chest, or place nurse's hand directly over patient's upper abdomen.
6. Observe complete respiratory cycle (one inspiration and one expiration).
7. After observing cycle, look at watch's second hand and begin to count rate: when sweep hand hits number on dial, begin timeframe, counting "one" with first full respiratory cycle.
8. If rhythm is regular, count number of respirations in 30 seconds and multiply by 2. If rhythm is irregular, less than 12, or greater than 20, count for 1 full minute.
9. Assess depth of respirations by observing degree of chest wall movement while counting rate.
10. Observe rhythm of ventilatory cycle. Normal breathing is regular and uninterrupted.
11. Replace bed linen and patient's gown.
12. Discuss findings with patient as needed.
13. Perform hand hygiene.
14. Document the procedure in the patient's record.

Excerpted and adapted from Perry AG, Potter PA: *Clinical nursing skills & techniques*, ed 7, St. Louis, 2010, Mosby.

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