Radial Pulse Testing Protocol

The radial artery courses deeply on the lateral (thumb side) aspect of the forearm and becomes superficial near the distal head of the radius. By placing the first two fingers over this region and gently pressing inward, the radial pulse can be palpated

- You can take the pulse at the neck, the wrist, or the chest. We recommend the wrist, where the radial pulse is located.

- The radial pulse is found over the bones of the wrist in a line below the 1st and 2nd digit on the posterior surface of the wrist. The radial pulse can be felt on the artery of the wrist in line with the thumb.

- Place the tips of the index and middle fingers over the artery and press lightly. Do not use the thumb as the testers pulse is close to the surface in the thumb.

- Take a full 60-second count of the heartbeats, or take for 30 seconds and multiply by 2. Start the count on a beat, which is counted as "zero".

- Radial pulses can be difficult to obtain with individuals who have large amounts of subcutaneous fat over the palpation site.