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Standard Guide for Training the Emergency Medical Technician to Perform Patient Examination Techniques¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This guide covers the minimum patient examination techniques that the Emergency Medical Technician shall be trained to use when assessing ill or injured patients of all ages.

1.2 This guide is one of a series which together describe the minimum training standard for the Emergency Medical Technician.

1.3 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety, health, and environmental practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

1.4 *This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standardization established in the Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recommendations issued by the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*²

[F1031 Practice for Training the Emergency Medical Technician \(Basic\)](#)

2.2 *Other Referenced Standards:*

[NHTSA National EMS Scope of Practice Model](#)³

[NHTSA National EMS Education Guidelines](#)⁴

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions:*

¹ This guide is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee F30 on Emergency Medical Services and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee F30.02 on Personnel, Training and Education.

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² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

³ Available from: <http://www.ems.gov/education/EMSScope.pdf>

⁴ Available from: <http://www.ems.gov/pdf/811077a.pdf>

3.1.1 *emergency medical technician (EMT) (NHTSA)*—The primary duty of the Emergency Medical Technician is to provide basic emergency medical care and transportation for critical and emergent patients who access the emergency medical system. This individual possesses the basic knowledge and skills necessary to provide patient care and transportation. Emergency Medical Technicians function as part of a comprehensive Emergency Medical Services response, under medical oversight. Emergency Medical Technicians perform interventions with the basic equipment typically found on an ambulance. The Emergency Medical Technician is a link from the scene to the emergency health care system. Emergency Medical Technicians' scope of practice includes basic, noninvasive interventions to reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with acute out-of-hospital medical and traumatic emergencies. Emergency care is based on assessment findings.

3.2 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

3.2.1 *auscultation*—examination by listening with a stethoscope.

3.2.2 *inspection*—examination by careful visualization of the body or a part of the body.

3.2.3 *palpation*—examination by touching with the hand.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 This guide establishes the minimum national standard for training the Emergency Medical Technician to perform patient examination techniques on patients of all ages.

4.2 This guide shall be used by those who wish to identify the minimum training standard for the Emergency Medical Technician as it relates to the performance of patient examination techniques.

4.3 This guide shall be used as the basis to revise Practice [F1031](#).

4.4 Every person who is identified as an Emergency Medical Technician shall have been trained in accordance with this guide.

4.5 This guide does not stand alone and must be used in conjunction with the applicable documents cited in Section 2.

5. Examination Techniques

5.1 The Emergency Medical Technician shall be trained to perform the following examination techniques and to recognize the differences that exist because of age and sex:

- 5.1.1 Assess respirations for rate, rhythm, and quality;
- 5.1.2 Auscultate breath sounds;
- 5.1.3 Assess rate and regularity of the following pulses: carotid, brachial, radial, femoral, and pedal;

- 5.1.4 Palpate blood pressure;
- 5.1.5 Auscultate blood pressure;
- 5.1.6 Assess mental status and level of consciousness;
- 5.1.7 Inspect the body;
- 5.1.8 Palpate the body;
- 5.1.9 Assess sensory perception;
- 5.1.10 Assess motor function; and
- 5.1.11 Assess airway patency.

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