



**BACHELOR of Science IN NURSING PROGRAM
CLINICAL TECHNIQUES
June 2014**

The following lists identify the specific clinical techniques that are included in our clinical technique courses NURS 1020, NURS 2020 and NURS 3020 in Level 1, 2 and 4. Skills that are not formally taught in the clinical technique courses may be taught and learned during the clinical courses throughout the program. This document also includes a list of nursing knowledge and skills related to the community context (home care and public health). The skills taught are within the Scope of Practice for Registered Nurses (June, 2014) as set by the College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia.

Level 1: NURS 1019 – Clinical Techniques (Assessment)

This course presents essential skills and behaviors for conducting psychosocial and physical assessment. It includes techniques for taking a health history in order to identify health needs.

Specific Clinical Techniques:

- Basic interview skills
- Physical examination techniques (inspection, palpation, percussion, auscultation)
- Lung marking and listening for breath sounds
- TPR (including apical rate)
- BP
- Lung marking and listening for abdominal sounds
- Bladder palpation
- Breast examination
- Assessment of “tubes”
- ROM – test muscle and joints for strength and symmetry
- Basic physical assessment of systems
- Psychosocial assessment
- Health history taking
- Level of Consciousness, assessment of dementia/confusion

Level 1: NURS 1020 – Clinical Techniques 1

Specific Clinical Techniques:

- Medical asepsis
- Complete and partial bed bath
- Bedmaking
- Clean gloving

- Standard Precautions and Isolation Precautions covering these modes of transmission:
 - a) contact
 - b) droplet
 - c) airborne
- Back massage
- Mouth and denture care
- Feeding patients
- ROM (reviewed during hygiene class)
- Positioning
- Transfer techniques and transfer devices
- Application of transparent dressing (no cleaning)
- Restraints
- Crutch walking, use of cane, use of walker
- Oral and topical medications, ear and eye drops
- Aerosol nebulization medication
- Intake and output
- Use of bedpans and urinals
- Use of incontinent briefs
- Catheter and condom drainage
- Urine testing
- Collection of unsterile specimen
- Bowel care (includes enemas, suppositories)
- Oxygen by cannula and mask, nebulizers, oral airways
- Oral suctioning
- Relaxation therapies (progressive relaxation, breathing, guided imagery)
- Computerized Medication Systems (Omnicell)
- Bladder scanner

Level 2: NURS 2020 – Clinical Techniques 2

Specific Clinical Techniques

- Preoperative and postoperative assessment
- Preoperative teaching and discharge teaching
- Surgical asepsis, surgical hand washing
- Masking and gloving
- Glucometer Training & Capillary blood glucose monitoring
- Injections (subcutaneous, intradermal, intramuscular and Z-track)
- Sterile dressing change
- Intravenous therapy (calculating rates, regulating, maintaining, monitoring, changing bags, discontinuing, priming and changing tubing, troubleshooting problems)
- Electronic infusion devices, Alaris IV pump training (online & hands on)
- IV medications via a main and minibag
- Suture and staple removal
- Wound drains – shortening and removal

- Collection of sterile wound specimen
- Urinary catheters (management, irrigation, collection of a sterile specimen, removal and continuous bladder irrigation)
- Ostomy care

Level 4: NURS 3020 – Clinical Techniques 3

Specific Clinical Techniques:

- Assessment of central venous catheters (CVC) and dressings. Students are not taught to change CVC dressings, including PICC dressings.
- Blood administration
- Intermittent infusion devices (saline locks)
- IV push medications
- Complex wound management (included diabetic, pressure, venous and arterial ulcers)
- Nasogastric intubation and maintenance and nose care
- Catheterization and collection of sterile urine specimen
- Pain management (assessment of patients who have patient controlled analgesia or epidural infusions)
- Enteral nutrition and TPN
- Neuro vital signs
- Chest drainage systems
- Tracheotomy care

Emphasis in the Clinical Techniques 1, 2 & 3 courses is placed on students understanding the purpose of the skill, the focused assessment related to the skill and the safe demonstration of the skill. Communication aspects and the application of research related to skills are also included. Within each course, students are provided opportunities for consolidation of skills within a simulated environment to incorporate clinical decision making, teamwork and nursing process.

The BCIT Nursing Program Document – Student Guidelines, Policies and Procedures clarifies student responsibility in relation to particular clinical techniques. Students are required to refer to this document for direction and clarification related to skills performed in the clinical setting.

Nursing Clinical Courses level 1 through 6 (NURS 1030, NURS 2030, NURS 3034, NURS 3038, NURS 4032, NURS 8100, NURS 8380 & NURS 7080).

The following clinical techniques are not formally taught in the Clinical Technique courses. These skills may be taught and learned during orientation to the clinical courses or during the clinical experience.

- Operating mechanical lifting devices
- Preparing for and assisting with special aseptic procedures (e.g. lumbar puncture)
- Applying bandages, binders, slings, tensors

- Transcribing physicians' written orders
- Changing straight catheter to urometer
- Diabetic foot care
- Applying heat and cold
- Eye care, applying eye patches
- Nose and ear care (including hearing aids)
- Use of universal tub
- Post mortem care
- Specialty baths, i.e. sitz bath, use of century tub
- Applying alternating pressure mattress
- Colon and vagina irrigation
- O₂ saturation
- Caring for patients with braces, splints, cervical collars
- Caring for patients with casts
- Caring for patients on position and turning frames
- Maintenance of traction
- Providing pin care
- Providing stump care
- Reapplying weights for intermittent skin traction
- Thromboembolic Device (TED) and Sequential Compression Device (SCD) or Sequential Compression Stockings (SCDS)
- Assessing pedal pulses using a Doppler
- Isolation techniques including standard precautions
- Applying protective devices – elbow/heel protectors, footboards, cradles, padded side rails
- Applying and removing prosthetic devices
- Humidification

Childbearing/infant clinical techniques:

- Palpating intensity of contractions
- Assessing fundal height & tone
- Caring for patients with fetal heart rate monitors
- Caring for newborn immediately after birth
- Caring for newborn cord
- Bottle feeding
- Newborn assessment
- Teaching parents about newborn bathing, bundling, positioning, feeding and burping
- Providing anticipatory guidance regarding infant safety, growth and development
- Caring for a neonate receiving phototherapy
- Caring of the perineum
- Evaluating lochia
- Evaluating fundus
- Specialty bath (sitz)
- Assessing signs and assist with proper latch on the breast

- Assisting with breast feeding and postpartum breast care
- Assessing infant swallowing and sucking pattern

Infant and Early Childhood clinical techniques

- Temperature – axilla
- Apical Rate
- Respiration
- BP – with monitor
- Weighing and measuring children
- Assessing neurovascular status (CWMS) and maintaining appropriate flow sheets and charting
- Assessing and caring for a child having a seizure, initiating seizure precautions
- Assessing and caring for infant/child with a fever.
- Assessing respiratory status (lung auscultation, pulse oximeter)
- Maintaining oxygen therapy via pediatric mask, nasal prongs or oxygen hood
- Maintaining IV and IV pump
- Administering IV medications via minibag
- Siting and administering parenteral medications to infants and children
- Administering oral medications to different ages appropriately
- Administering inhaled medications (puffers, nebulizers)
- Preoperative and postoperative care
- Providing care for a child in cast or traction
- Assessing hydration and fluid requirements, maintaining adequate intake, keeping an accurate I & O sheet, bottle feeding, burping
- Assessing nutritional status using food requirements according to age.
- Feeding infants & children, toddlers
- Bathing children
- Diapering, holding and cuddling infants and toddlers
- Assessing pain (using face scales)
- Maintaining and documenting pain flow sheets
- Providing appropriate pain management (medication, diversion)
- Maintaining isolation and universal precautions with children
- Collecting specimens (urine and stool)
- Initiating play activities at an appropriate level
- Assessing age appropriate development & behaviors (initiating care that enhances these behaviors)
- Assessing immunization status & initiate follow-up as required
- Initiating parent teaching and anticipatory guidance
- Assessing and documenting child-parent interactions
- Explaining treatments to children at an age appropriate level
- Mental health assessment
- Assessing suicide risk and implementing appropriate measures
- Maintaining a safe, consistent, non-threatening environment
- Assessing family interactions and effect on child

- Observing for child neglect or abuse

Mental Health Nursing Knowledge and Skills

The extent to which a student has learned and practiced all of the following skills depends on where the student was placed for the Mental Health Clinical experience.

- Conducting a complete and a focused mental status examination and documenting the findings.
- Conducting a mini mental status examination to determine cognitive functioning and documenting the findings.
- Conducting a mental health history and/or collecting mental health history data and documenting the findings.
- Conducting a suicide assessment and documenting the findings.
- Conducting assessments for effects & side effects of psychotropic medications (including specific assessment tools).
- Assessment of level of anxiety and the expressions of anxiety contained in each.
- Intervening with anxiety using interpersonal approaches and medications.
- Assessment of escalating agitation using interpersonal approaches and/or medications to prevent aggression.
- Assessment of escalating anger/aggression to make judgments as to when to handle the situation on own and when to seek assistance.
- Assessment and intervention (on own or with assistance) of selected mental health issues and S&S of a mental illness:
 - Depression
 - Psychosis
 - Manipulative behaviour
 - Paranoia and/or delusional disorder
 - Substance use
 - Substance use and a mental illness (dual diagnosis)
 - Emotional distress related to a major illness (ca diagnosis, DHD, neurological illness/injury).
- Interpersonal skills:
 - Limit setting
 - Contracting for safety with the patient
 - De escalating anxiety and with assistance de escalating anger & aggression
 - Exploration of feelings/experiences & supportive helping
 - Developing questioning skills & strategies to promote and maintain hope in patients with chronic illnesses, terminal diagnosis etc.
 - Intervening using strategies other than verbal communication to decrease mental health symptoms (i.e. anxiety, distress) using structure and physical activity.
 - Beginning recognition and assessment for delirium, depression & dementia and making differentiation between these.

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Community Nursing Knowledge and Skills

Student experiences are dependent upon the unique needs of the clients and the health/community agency. Clients may refer to a person, group, family, community, or population. Health/community agency may refer to working with home health/public health clients at a health unit, or the same populations in a community setting.

- Organizing home/site visits or client contact and negotiating access and involvement
- Collaborating with clients to jointly determine meaningful and relevant health goals
- Holistic assessment of clients; both in the context of the immediate needs of the client and long-term, ongoing health issues
- Assessment of client needs, risks and capacity
- Adapting clinical techniques and medical asepsis appropriately for the environment
- Recognizing and responding to variations and challenges regarding personal boundaries in the community context
- Assessing environment for safety concerns and maintaining personal safety
- Collaborating with other health care professionals and coordinating client care
- Integration of family or caregiver or relevant resources as appropriate when providing care and/or collaborating with the client
- Gaining knowledge of and referring clients to community resources – agencies, programs, health care providers, support groups etc.
- Monitoring client efficacy with medication management systems in home health settings (eg. Dosette, bubble packs) and intervening appropriately
- In home health settings, Complex wound practice - knowledge of wound care products and assessment and intervention with wounds with support; electronic wound care charting (e.g. Pixalere)
- Monitoring oxygen equipment with support in home health settings
- Knowledge and skills of immunization counseling, obtaining informed consent, and participation in community immunization clinics as determined at each agency
- Appreciating communicable disease issues in the community and the management thereof.
- Applying growth and development theory and change theory.
- Incorporating the determinants of health into practice
- Chronic Disease Management – strategies to support client self-management
- Practices using the Canadian Community Health Nursing Standards as a guide:
 - Applying health promotion and prevention strategies in a variety of settings within the community

- Applying relevant community health theory to their practice
- Utilizing the principles of community development
- Providing comprehensive nursing care that incorporates the determinants of health
- Appreciating the complex needs of individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations
- Appreciating the significance of partnership/liaison with other community agencies in the planning of care of individuals, families, and the community
- Building individual and community capacity
- Appreciation of communicable disease issues in the community and the management thereof

Level 6 – Preceptorship 1 and 2

- All skills as noted in courses above.
- Student may insert and maintain nasogastric tubes on own once found competent to do so by the instructor or RN. In specialty nursing areas these students may insert N/G tubes into patients who are unconscious or neonates (less than 28 days old) under direct supervision of the RN if:
 - the agency agrees
 - the student participates in the agency in-service program.
- Students may change CVC dressings and insert IV's if:
 - the agency agrees
 - the student participates in the Adult Peripheral IV Insertion course at BCIT or in the agency's certification training for IV insertion, or
 - the student participates in the agency's training for CVC dressings.
 - the student complies with all the policies required of an RN in relation to CVC dressing change.
 - the student is directly supervised by the agency staff or preceptor throughout level 6.
- Students may perform **specialty nursing skills** if:
 - the agency agrees
 - the student participates in the related agency in-service program or approved alternative and
 - the student is under direct supervision by the agency staff or preceptor.