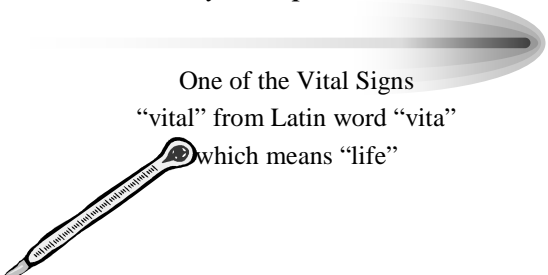



Body Temperature

One of the Vital Signs
“vital” from Latin word “vita”
which means “life”




Some Definitions/Facts

- Fahrenheit scale is usually used.
- Daily variation of 1-3 degrees.
- Lowest in AM, highest in PM
- Know what a patient’s normal temp. is.
- Balance between heat produced (metabolism) and heat lost (skin and perspiration)
- Elders may need room temperatures 75-76
- Wash hair last during bathing, wet hair leads to loss of body heat.
- Nightcap, socks, and mittens may be needed at noc.
- Experts often let mild fevers run their course.



Average Temperature Variations



Temperature Affected By

- Illness
- environment
- hydration
- Age (alters body's ability to regulate temp. Older adults may not have a fever with infection)
- Crying (raises)
- Infection
- menstrual cycle
- exercise
- emotions
- pregnancy
- time of day

Four Body Areas to Measure Temperature Patient's condition will determine best site

- Mouth (oral) most common- don't use for unconscious, mouth breather, small child, confused, N/G tube, O₂ (except nasal prongs) coughing, seizure precautions, oral surgery.
- Ear (aural) fastest- not accurate in elderly, ^ cerumen.
- Rectal (most accurate) core body temperature. Don't use if hemorrhoids, diarrhea, fecal impaction, combative behavior, rectal bleeding, had rectal surgery, rectal or colon disease, a colostomy.

Body Areas for Temperature Measurement (con't)

- Axillary or groin (least accurate) Use only when the patient's condition does not permit the use of the others.

Clinical Thermometers

The Glass Thermometer

- Galinstan non-toxic (liquid alloy blend of Gallium, Indium, and Tin) rises up column until maximum temperature is achieved. Definitive reading in 3 min.
- Three types of glass thermometers in use:
 - 1) Oral (classic) green cap
 - 2) Rectal- red cap and red stripe
 - 3) MagnaTherm comes in a magnified case (will be using this one in class and C.N.A. testing)

Using the Glass Thermometer

Description of Thermometer

To Read the Thermometer

- Starts with 94 or 95 F- each long line indicates a one-degree elevation in temp.
- Every other degree (long line) is marked with a number.
- Between each long line are four shorter lines.
- Each short line indicates 2/10 or 0.2 of one degree.
- Hold at eye level
- Rotate up and down looking at apex of prism for column of mercury.
- Take reading where mercury or chemical ends.

Measuring an Oral Temperature using a glass thermometer

- Ask pt. if they have drank or smoked in last 15 min.
- Apply gloves/ insert thermometer in sheath.
- Insert thermometer under pt's. tongue, angle toward side.
- Pt to hold thermometer gently, with lips closed X 3 min.
- Remove thermometer with gloved hand, remove sheath and place in other gloved hand.
- Read thermometer, place on paper towel, discard gloves using the proper technique to not contaminate self.
- Temperature is assumed to be oral if no symbol is present.

*Measuring a Rectal Temperature
glass thermometer*

- Position pt. on side.
- Shake down thermometer
- Don gloves, thermometer sheath, lubricant.
- Expose anus- insert gently 1 1/2 in. HOLD!
- Hold for 3-5 minutes.
- Remove, wipe from stem to bulb. Wipe pt.
- Record an (R) after the reading.

*Measuring An Axillary or Groin Temp.
glass thermometer*

- Wear gloves if open lesions or body fluids.
- Wipe area dry.
- Fold arm across chest.
- Thermometer in fold.
- Hold in place x 10 min
- Wear gloves for groin.
- Record an (AX) after reading.

*Measuring Temperature
using an electronic thermometer*
Oral Rectal

- Cover blue probe with sheath.
- Gloves unnecessary.
- Insert probe under tongue.
- When buzzer signals take reading.
- Wear gloves.
- Insert lubricated probe 1 1/2 in.
- Otherwise procedure the same for glass thermometer.

*Measuring Temperature
using a Tympanic Thermometer*

- Select appropriate mode on thermometer.
- Make sure lens is clean and intact.
- Gently pull ear pinna back and up to straighten ear canal.
- Place clean cover on probe.
- Insert the probe until it seals the ear canal.
- Aim probe toward tympanic membrane.
- Press activation button.
- When a reading appears remove probe.

Cleaning Glass Thermometers

- 1) Wash thermometers in warm water and soap.
- 2) Dry, check for chips, shake down.
- 3) Wipe with alcohol swab.
- 4) If facility uses mercury thermometer, follow their policy/procedure.
