

Insertion and Maintenance of Arterial Lines by Respiratory Therapists

The American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC) endorses the use of qualified and appropriately educated Respiratory Therapists to insert and perform maintenance of arterial lines.

Because respiratory therapists are familiar with arterial punctures and are available around the clock seven (7) days a week they are excellent resources for inserting and maintaining arterial lines.

The respiratory therapist's education provides extensive training in maintenance of normal acid-base balance, oxygenation and oxygen delivery, ventilation, and interpretation and management of arterial blood gases. These fundamentals of Respiratory Care education make the respiratory therapist uniquely qualified to undertake further education to be competent in this procedure.

The requisite education for a respiratory therapist to be qualified to insert and maintain arterial lines should include specific training, proof of competence and continuing education as outlined by those institutions that use respiratory therapists to perform this procedure.

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