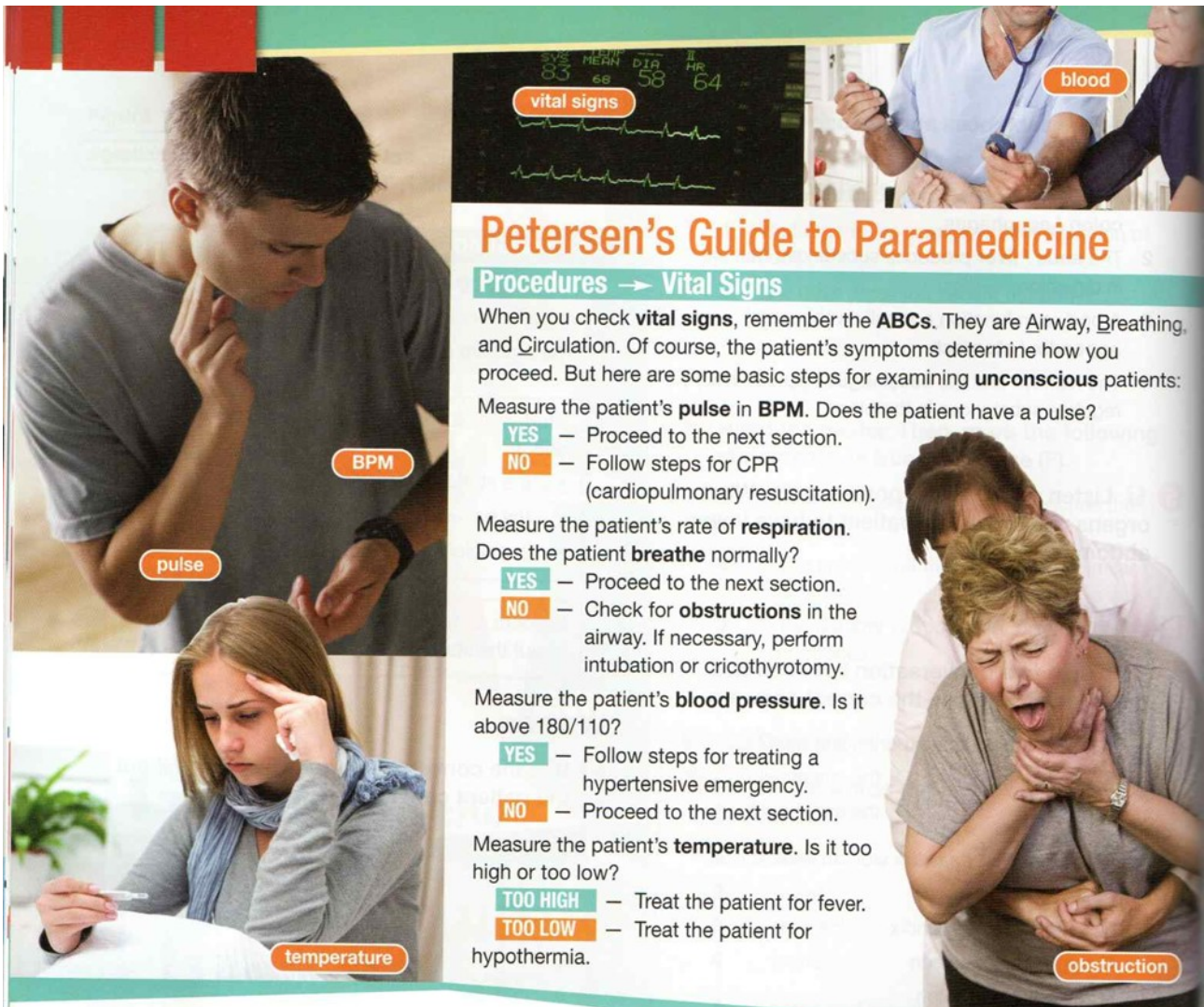


UNIT 5. Symptoms and Vital Signs

READING – Vital Signs

1. Before you read the passage, talk about these questions.

1. What vital signs do you know?
2. What is the purpose of measuring them?
3. How should you respond to abnormal vital signs?



Petersen's Guide to Paramedicine
Procedures → Vital Signs

When you check **vital signs**, remember the **ABCs**. They are **A**irway, **B**reathing, and **C**irculation. Of course, the patient's symptoms determine how you proceed. But here are some basic steps for examining **unconscious** patients:

Measure the patient's **pulse** in **BPM**. Does the patient have a pulse?

YES — Proceed to the next section.
NO — Follow steps for CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation).

Measure the patient's rate of **respiration**. Does the patient **breathe** normally?

YES — Proceed to the next section.
NO — Check for **obstructions** in the airway. If necessary, perform intubation or cricothyrotomy.

Measure the patient's **blood pressure**. Is it above 180/110?

YES — Follow steps for treating a hypertensive emergency.
NO — Proceed to the next section.

Measure the patient's **temperature**. Is it too high or too low?

TOO HIGH — Treat the patient for fever.
TOO LOW — Treat the patient for hypothermia.

2. Read the handbook chapter. Mark these following statements as true (T) or false (F).

1. ____ The passage gives instructions for examining unconscious patients.
2. ____ For obstructions in the airway, paramedics should perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation.
3. ____ High blood pressure can lead to a hypertensive emergency.

Vocabulary: Vital Signs

1. Match the words (1-5) with the definitions (A-E).

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| 1. ___ ABC | 4. ___ Obstruction |
| 2. ___ Pulse | 5. ___ Respiration |
| 3. ___ Breathe | |

- A) the beating sensation that is felt by placing the fingers against the wrist or neck.
- B) the act of drawing oxygen into the lungs and then releasing carbon dioxide
- C) to inhale and exhale through the nose or mouth
- D) something that blocks the passage of something else
- E) an abbreviation of the important factors to assess with an unresponsive patient

2. Fill in the blanks with the correct words or phrases from the box.

Unconscious – BPM – vital signs – blood pressure – temperature – heart rate – hypothermia – hyperthermia – primary vital signs – body mass index

1. The doctor checked the patient's _____ to determine whether he had a fever.
2. A heart rate between 60 and 80 _____ is normal for most adults.
3. The patient was _____, so she could not explain her symptoms.
4. To measure _____, the doctor wraps a device, or cuff, around someone's arm.
5. Pulse and respiration rates are examples of _____.
6. We speak about _____ when the individual's body temperature is higher than normal.
7. The four _____ are: respiratory rate (RR), heart rate (HR), blood pressure (BP) and body temperature (BT).
8. The value derived from the mass (weight) and the height of a person is called _____.
9. We suffer _____ when the individual's body temperature falls below normal limits.
10. The doctor asked the student to measure their _____ after running for five minutes.

Listening: Measuring Vital Signs

1. Listen to a conversation between an instructor and a student. Choose the correct answers.

1. In the man's example, what is true about the patient?

A. His pulse is weak	C. His temperature is low
B. His respiration is normal	D. His blood pressure is high

Respiratory rate She has a BP of 140/90 / Her BP is 140/90
 Oxygen saturation She has a pulse of 110/ Her pulse is 110 BPM

3. Watch the video (2:40) and describe the levels of blood pressure with the correct characteristics:

Below 90/60	90/60 to 120/80	120/80 to 140/90	Over 140/90

4. Watch the video again (4:13) and take notes on the types of thermometers and how to read them:

Types of thermometers

- Placed in the mouth, armpit or rectum:
- Placed in the ear:
- Placed on the forehead:

Normal temperatures

- Fahrenheit:
- Celsius:

5. In pairs, practice these phrases to check someone’s blood pressure and temperature:

What phrases might you say to a patient when checking their blood pressure?

- Questions you might ask *Do you mind if I check your blood pressure?*
- Instructions you might give *Can you hold out your arm for me please?*
- Explanations you might make *I'm just going to wrap the cuff around your arm*
- Comments you might make *Your blood pressure appears to be normal/is a little high*

What phrases might you say to a patient when checking their temperature?

- A question *I'd like to take your temperature now, if that's alright?*
- An instruction *Would you mind turning your head to the side please?*
- An explanation *I'm just going to put the thermometer in your ear and wait for a few moments.*
- A comment *Your temperature is 38.6, which is quite high*