

SFHPB1

Undertake a digital rectal examination of the prostate



Overview

This standard covers the digital examination of the prostate and the surrounding tissue. It does not infer competence to undertake a general urological examination. This standard covers the digital examination of the prostate and surrounding tissues undertaken in both primary and secondary care settings. Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1 check the environment and equipment to ensure that everything is properly prepared for the procedure including access to a chaperone
- P2 read the patient's notes, referral letter and relevant investigation results and identify any special instructions, investigations or items for which you need to seek advice
- P3 determine the appropriateness of the examination and decide on whether or not to proceed
- P4 greet and accurately identify the patient and introduce yourself and any colleagues present
- P5 identify any special precautions which are required and take appropriate action
- P6 explain the procedure and potential discomfort to the patient and answer any questions at a level and pace that is appropriate to:
 - P6.1 their level of understanding;
 - P6.2 their culture and background;
 - P6.3 their preferred way of communicating;
 - P6.4 their needs
- P7 ensure that the patient has consented to the examination
- P8 apply local procedure-specific infection control guidelines
- P9 position the patient correctly for the procedure and ensure their comfort within the constraints of the procedure
- P10 take appropriate action to ensure the patient's privacy and dignity throughout and following the procedure
- P11 inform the patient that the examination is about to commence
- P12 ensure sufficient lubricant is used to avoid patient discomfort
- P13 gently insert a gloved finger into the rectum and note any potential anal stricture, fissure or inability to palpate the prostate which may preclude completion of the examination
- P14 identify the prostate by feel and determine its consistency, tenderness and the presence of nodules
- P15 complete a circumferential examination of the rectum and report any abnormality to relevant personnel
- P16 examine the glove finger used for the examination on withdrawal for presence of blood and, if any is present, report to relevant personnel
- P17 ensure that single use items are disposed of
- P18 maintain communications with the patient and respond to any questions or needs throughout the procedure
- P19 assess the patient's needs following the procedure and offer support, if appropriate
- P20 ensure the patient has all required information including the outcome of the examination and any further appointments and respond to any questions or requests for further information

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- P21 record the details of the examination in the patient's record, including details of any abnormalities or the presence of blood. Ensure that timely and appropriate information is provided to the primary care team and other relevant personnel
 - P22 ensure that you keep up to date with relevant clinical developments and changes to guidelines

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 national and local policies and guidelines for undertaking digital rectal examinations.
- K2 national and local infection control policies and guidelines and their application to digital rectal examinations.
- K3 national and local policies and guidelines for patient identification
- K4 national and local policies and guidelines for informed consent
- K5 national and local policies and guidelines for patient records, their storage and confidentiality of information
- K6 the range of information which should be made available to the patient
- K7 the national and local policies and guidelines for risk management and adverse incidents
- K8 normal and abnormal anatomy of the prostate and surrounding tissues detectable during digital rectal examinations
- K9 the common pathologies of the prostate
- K10 the clinical indications for the procedure
- K11 the clinical conditions which require special precautions to be applied
- K12 the importance of keeping up-to-date with relevant clinical developments and guidelines
- K13 the preparation of the environment and equipment for digital rectal examinations
- K14 the roles and responsibilities of other team members
- K15 the limits of one's own knowledge and experience and the importance of not operating beyond these
- K16 the importance of clear and direct communications

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Additional Information

Links to other NOS

This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

Dimension: HWB6 Assessment and treatment planning

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