

Ankle Brachial Index (ABI) using an automated machine, (Adult)

Site Applicability

All VCH & PHC sites

Practice Level

For the following professions (within their respective scope of practice) with additional education

- NP, RN

Policy Statement

VCH & PHC nurses must complete the Ankle Brachial Index (ABI) learning module developed by the Provincial Nursing Skin & Wound Committee (see link below) and be signed off by the Wound Clinician or Clinical Educator as competent before performing the ABI procedure (see page 22 of the ABI Education Learning Module for the Competency Checklist).

VCH & PHC nurses will follow the Decision Support Tool (DST) developed by the Provincial Nursing Skin & Wound Committee (see guideline link below) when performing the Ankle Brachial Index procedure using an automated machine for adults.

Need to Know

- Ankle Brachial Index (ABI) is a non-invasive test to measure the arterial blood flow in the lower legs. It is used to screen clients for the presence and severity of arterial compromise and to identify those clients who require further vascular assessment, as well as being useful in predicting the potential for healing of lower leg wounds.
- The results of an ABI should be used in conjunction with a review of client history and a complete lower limb assessment when deciding on care.
- The test can be done using either a [hand-held Doppler](#) or an automated ABI machine. The automated ABI machine allows for reading on all four limbs to be done at the same time as well as, provide a machine calculated index score. In addition to these two methods, ABI testing is also done in a Vascular Lab.
- The purpose of the portable automated ABI machine is to complement the advanced lower limb assessment for clients with lower leg wounds who are being managed by Wound Clinicians. Any other ABI testing is done at the discretion of the Wound Clinician.

Practice Guideline

The Provincial DST provides detailed guidance on the procedure steps and the interpretation of the results of test.

- **Guideline:** [Ankle Brachial Index \(ABI\) in Adults using an Automated ABI Machine](#)
- **Education Module:** [Ankle Brachial Index \(ABI\): Learning Module for Handheld Doppler & ABI Automated System](#)

Documentation

As per site documentation guidelines.

Related Documents

VCH-PHC:

- [Ankle Brachial Index \(ABI\): Procedure in Adults using a Handheld Doppler](#)
- [Lower Limb Ulcers \(Arterial, Venous and Mixed\): Guidelines for Assessment & Treatment in Adults](#)

Developed by

The British Columbia Provincial Nursing Skin and Wound Committee

VCH/PHC representatives on the Committee:

WOC Nurse, VCH
WOC Nurse, Vancouver Community, VCH
CWOCN, Lions Gate Hospital, VCH
WOC Nurse, VGH, VCH
Wound Clinician, Richmond Community, VCH
WOC Nurse, Providence Health Care

Endorsed by

VCH: *(Regional SharePoint 2nd Reading)*

Health Authority Profession Specific Advisory Council Chairs (HAPSAC)
Health Authority & Area Specific Interprofessional Advisory Council Chairs (HAIAC)
Operations Directors
Professional Practice Directors

PHC: Professional Practice Standards Committee

Final Sign-off & Approval for Posting by

Vice President Professional Practice and Chief Clinical Information Officer, VCH

Professional Practice Standards Committee, PHC

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