



Carotid Sinus Massage

Clinical Indications:



- Treatment of supraventricular tachycardia dysrhythmias.

Procedure:

1. Oxygen, ECG monitoring, and IV therapy must be established prior to performing carotid sinus massage. Emergency medications and equipment should be immediately available.
2. Record the ECG rhythm continuously while performing all vagal maneuvers.
3. Try Valsalva's maneuver first if patient is able to cooperate.
4. Gently palpate both carotid arteries **separately** to assess the quality of the carotid pulses. Auscultate both carotid arteries for the presence of bruits. If the pulses are grossly unequal, consult with medical control prior to performing carotid sinus massage. If a bruit is detected, use the opposite artery (if bruit free) for this procedure.
5. Locate the carotid pulse near the angle of the jaw using the flat side of two fingers and press firmly against the carotid artery toward the cervical vertebrae.
6. Massage the area using either a circular or vertical motion until the heart rate starts to slow or for a maximum of 1-2 minutes. **Never** massage both carotid arteries at the same time.
7. Continuously monitor the ECG rhythm visually.
8. If unsuccessful, administer an appropriate pharmacological agent, and if necessary, repeat carotid sinus massage on the same side.
9. The maximum number of attempts using carotid sinus massage is three - using the same side only.

Certification Requirements:

- Maintain knowledge of the indications, contraindications, technique, and possible complications of the procedure. Assessment of this knowledge may be accomplished via quality assurance mechanisms, classroom demonstrations, skills stations, or other mechanisms as deemed appropriate by the local EMS System.