


# Policy Document Template

 <b>Halton Healthcare</b> GEORGETOWN • MILTON • OAKVILLE	<b>Adult Continuous Cardiac Rhythm Monitoring Policy</b>			
	Program/Dept.:	Cardiology Medicine Program	Document Category:	Cardiology
	Developed by:	Professional Practice	Original Approval Date:	Sept 2013
	Approved by:	Medicine Cardiology, Medical Advisory Committee	Reviewed Date:	March 2023
Review Frequency:	3 years	Revised Date:	March 2023	

## 1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To standardize the care for adult patients who require continuous cardiac rhythm monitoring in accordance with best practice.

## 2.0 Scope

Authorized nurses caring for adult patients requiring continuous cardiac rhythm monitoring

## 3.0 Policy

- 3.1 A provider's order (or medical directive) is required to initiate continuous cardiac rhythm monitoring.
- 3.2 A baseline 12 lead ECG is required prior to initiation of continuous cardiac monitoring. If an ECG has not been completed or ordered, contact provider.
- 3.3 Patients requiring continuous cardiac rhythm monitoring will have vital signs completed as per the patient standards of care or as per provider.
- 3.4 An authorized nurse will be assigned to each patient requiring continuous cardiac rhythm monitoring.
- 3.5 A provider order is required for temporary suspension of continuous cardiac rhythm monitoring. An authorized nurse will remain with the patient for the entire duration the patient is off the unit if there is no order for temporary suspension of continuous cardiac monitoring.
- 3.6 Cardiac rhythm strip analysis and documentation will be completed upon initiation of continuous cardiac rhythm monitoring, as per Standard of Care, and PRN (with any changes in cardiac rhythm or change in patient status), then prior to the discontinuation of continuous cardiac monitoring.
- 3.7 Cardiac monitoring duration will be extended in the event any red alarm (see definitions) or change in patient status, call most responsible physician (MRP) to reorder continuous cardiac monitoring.

## 4.0 Procedure

### 4.1 Initiation

- a. Ensure a baseline ECG is completed.
- b. If a portable device is used, ensure a battery is fully charged upon initiation of continuous cardiac monitoring.
- c. Conduct skin prep, including cleansing skin and clipping hair as required.
- d. Apply electrodes and leads using standard lead placement.
- e. Customize any alarms as per patient specific parameters.
- f. Educate patient and family regarding continuous cardiac monitoring.

## Policy Document Template

### 4.2 Maintenance:

- a. Change electrodes every 24 hours and prn.
- b. Do not apply tape around monitor or leads.
- c. If unable to provide continuous cardiac rhythm monitoring for any reason, notify provider.
- d. Review alarm settings and alarm limits as per patient specific parameters at the start of every shift and before each shift ends, review and delete any non-pertinent alarms from history.
- e. Print all saved rhythm strips and place in patient's chart.

### 4.3 Discontinuation:

- a. Discontinue continuous cardiac rhythm monitoring as per provider's order.
- b. Complete a final cardiac rhythm analysis and print any additional rhythm strips prior to discharging patient from the central monitoring station.
- c. Place printed rhythm strips in patient chart
- d. If a telemetry pack was used to monitor the patient, remove battery, and clean pack

### 4.4 Alarm Management:

- a. In the event of a red alarm or change in patient status, immediately assess the patient, interpret the rhythm, and notify MRP. Document all actions in Expanse. 4.18 In the event of a yellow alarm, assess the patient, interpret the rhythm, and notify MRP as required. Document all actions in Expanse.

## 5.0 Definitions:

**Authorized Nurse** – a nurse who has completed a Coronary Care level I course or an equivalent rhythm interpretation course and has successfully completed Arrhythmia Interpretation Knowledge Assessment.

### Types of Cardiac Monitoring:

#### Static Cardiac Monitoring –

**Bedside Monitoring** – a static monitoring system allows a cardiac rhythm signal from patient electrodes to transmit directly to a monitor screen via a monitor lead system. The signal is transmitted to a central station.

#### Ambulatory Monitoring -

**Continuous Cardiac Monitoring** – continuous cardiac monitoring is a valuable tool to detect changes in heart rate, rhythm, and conduction, and is essential in the detection of life-threatening arrhythmias. Cardiac monitoring may take place using a bedside monitor or portable telemetry monitor.

**Holter Monitoring** – holter monitoring is a battery-operated portable device that measures and records cardiac electrical activity remotely. Holter monitoring is usually applied by the cardiorespiratory department.

**Telemetry Monitoring** – telemetry monitoring is a hospital portable monitoring system which uses a wireless network to transmit ECG, RR and/or SpO<sub>2</sub> data continuously from the

## Policy Document Template

patient to a centralized monitor location. This portable system allows transmission of the cardiac rhythm for ambulatory patients without requiring the patient to be attached to a static monitor.

**ECG** – an electrocardiogram is a diagnostic tool that measures and records the electrical activity of the heart via electrode placed on the skin

**Red Alarm** – a red alarm is an emergency alarm tone emitted by the bedside monitor and/or central station that requires an immediate response by the authorized nurse.

**Yellow Alarm** – a yellow alarm is an urgent alarm tone emitted by the bedside monitor and/or central station that requires an assessment of the patient as soon as possible.

### 6.0 Key Words

Cardiac rhythm monitoring, Telemetry, ECG, Electrocardiogram

### 7.0 Reviewed by/Consultation with

List position titles

**Signed by**

**Title**

---

---

### Appendices

<https://connections.haltonhealthcare.on.ca/clinical-resources/User%20Guides/ECG%20lead%20set%20placement%20and%20skin%20preparation.pdf>