

Examining a Patient's Cardiovascular System

1. Introduce yourself and ask your patient's **permission** to examine them.

2. Stand back and **look** at the patient

- Do they look **comfortable**?
- Are they in any **pain**?

3. Look at the patient's **hands and lips**

What might you be looking for?

4. Check for **capillary refill time**

Press the fingernail gently until it turns white, then take note of the **time** needed for the colour to return once pressure is released. Normal **capillary refill time** is usually less than 2 seconds.

What could it mean if the capillary time is longer than 2 seconds?

5. **Feel** for the pulse

Count for 15 seconds and then multiply by 4 to calculate beats per minute

Is the pulse **regular**?

Why do we feel for a pulse?

6. **Listen** to the patient's heart

We listen over these 4 areas to check that all parts of the heart

