



Arizona State Board of Nursing

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An advisory opinion adopted by AZBN is an interpretation of what the law requires. While an advisory opinion is not law, it is more than a recommendation. In other words, an advisory opinion is an official opinion of AZBN regarding the practice of nursing as it relates to the functions of nursing. Facility policies may restrict practice further in their setting and/or require additional expectations related to competency, validation, training, and supervision to assure the safety of their patient population and or decrease risk.

OPINION: PACEMAKER WIRES
APPROVED: X NOT APPROVED:
DATE: 1/90
REVISED DATE: 1/95, 11/02, 3/06
ORIGINATING COMMITTEE:
SCOPE OF PRACTICE COMMITTEE

ADVISORY OPINION PACEMAKER WIRES

It is within the scope of practice for a Registered Nurse (RN) to remove transvenous temporary pacemaker wires if the General Requirements outlined below are met. It is **not** within the Scope of Practice for a RN to remove epicardial temporary pacemaker wires.

- I. General Requirements
 - A. Written policy and procedures are maintained by the agency/employer.
 - B. Only RNs who have satisfactorily completed an instructional program and have supervised clinical practice are allowed to remove transvenous pacemaker wires.
 - C. Documentation of satisfactory completion of an instruction program and supervised clinical practice is on file with the agency/employer.
- II. Course of Instruction is to Include:
 - A. Anatomy and physiology.
 - B. Indications and contraindications.
 - C. Potential adverse reactions and management.
 - D. Technique of pacemaker wire removal.
 - E. Nursing care responsibilities.

RATIONALE

The rationale is that the potential for arrhythmia from a foreign object within the heart is reduced by removing the object, i.e. transvenous pacer wire.

Epicardial pacemaker wire removal carries an increased risk of bleeding, tearing of the saphenous vein and/or cardiac tamponade, complications that are outside the scope of practice for the RN to handle.

REFERENCE

Risks Associated with Removal of Ventricular Epicardial Pacing Wires After Cardiac Surgery.
American Journal of Critical Care. 11/98, Vol.7. No. 6

Lynne McHale Wiegand, D.J. and Carlson, K.K. American Association of Critical Care Nurses – Procedure Manual for Critical Care. 5th Edition, 2005, Saunders-Elsevier, Inc., St. Louis, pp. 361.