

*Meeting The Joint Commission's 2009 National Patient Safety Goals*

- For interventional procedure cases for which the catheter/instrument insertion site is not predetermined (e.g., cardiac catheterization, pacemaker insertion,)
- For teeth, the operative tooth name(s) and number are indicated on documentation or the operative tooth (teeth) is marked on the dental radiographs or dental diagram. The documentation, images, and/or diagrams are available in the procedure room before the start of the procedure.
- For premature infants when the mark may cause a permanent tattoo.

**UP.01.03.01**

A time-out is performed immediately prior to starting procedures.

**Rationale**

The purpose of the time-out immediately before starting the procedure is to conduct a final assessment that the correct patient, site, positioning, and procedure are identified and that, as applicable, all relevant documents, related information, and necessary equipment are available.

The time-out is consistently initiated by a designated member of the team and includes active communication among all relevant members of the procedure team. It is conducted in a standardized fail-safe mode (that is, the procedure is not started until all questions or concerns are resolved).

**Elements of Performance**

- Ⓜ C 1. (AHC, CAH, DSC, HAP, OBS) The time-out is conducted prior to starting the procedure and ideally prior to the introduction of the anesthesia process (including general/regional anesthesia, local anesthesia, and spinal anesthesia), unless contraindicated.
- A 2. (AHC, CAH, DSC, HAP, OBS) The time-out:
- Is standardized as defined by the organization
  - Is initiated by a designated member of the team.
  - Involves the immediate members of the procedure team, including the proceduralist(s), the anesthesia provider(s), the circulating nurse, the operating room technician, and other active participants as appropriate for the procedure, who will be participating in the procedure at its inception.

## Universal Protocol

- Involves interactive verbal communication between all team members; any team member is able to express concerns about the procedure verification.
  - Includes a defined process for reconciling differences in responses.
- A 3. (AHC, CAH, DSC, HAP, OBS) During the time-out, other activities are suspended to the extent possible without compromising patient safety so that all relevant members of the team are focused on the active confirmation of the correct patient, procedure, site, and other critical elements.
- A 4. (AHC, CAH, DSC, HAP, OBS) When two or more procedures are being performed on the same patient, a time-out is performed to confirm each procedure before it is initiated.
- Ⓜ A 5. (AHC, CAH, DSC, HAP, OBS) The time-out addresses:
- Correct patient identity.
  - Confirmation that the correct side and site are marked.
  - Accurate procedure consent form.
  - Agreement on the procedure to be done.
  - Correct patient position.
  - Relevant images and results are properly labeled and appropriately displayed.
  - The need to administer antibiotics (see NPSG.07.05.01) or fluids for irrigation purposes.
  - Safety precautions based on patient history or medication use.
- Ⓜ C 6. (AHC, CAH, DSC, HAP, OBS) The completed components of the Universal Protocol and time-out are clearly documented

The Universal Protocol and its requirements are applicable to ambulatory care, critical access hospitals, hospitals, and office-based surgery. Many organizations have put forth great effort to initiate, build awareness about, and implement the Universal Protocol. For instance, North Colorado Medical Center kicked off its implementation of the protocol with a sports theme; perioperative nurses wore referee outfits with whistles and passed out information on the protocol. The slogan for the festivities was "TIME OUT in the dugout, it's a whole new ballgame!" Ohio Hospital Association took the lead on its state's implementation of the protocol by developing a systematic statewide procedure. Having a statewide procedure avoids the problem of physicians having to learn multiple versions of implementation of the protocol, which helps prevent errors.