



Department of Nursing

Policy #027

Consent for Invasive Procedures

Status:	Originated 2025-06-27 Revised NA
Effective:	2025-06-27
Initiated by:	Bylaws, Policies, and Handbooks Committee
WAC:	246-840-519

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to support safe practice of “invasive” nursing procedures for students and instructors including the processes for requesting student consent for participation. Invasive procedures are defined as any procedure that involves breaking the skin (e.g. subcutaneous injection) or involvement of eyes, ears, nose, and/or mouth (e.g. administering eye drops). Nursing Policy #026 Consent for Physical Examination details similar but distinctly different processes for physical examination of peers.

AUDIENCE

This policy applies to all Heritage University Nursing Department (HUND) students and instructors.

PLAN

Use of human subjects for practice of procedures and skills is foundational to nursing practice. When possible, the Department of Nursing tries to arrange real or simulated patients for students to practice their skills. Knowledge alone is not sufficient for psychomotor skill development - proficient performance of procedures is necessary to minimize complications and improve patient outcomes (Gromer, et al., 2025). Additionally, experiential learning through peer practice is utilized for development of skills since research shows it is particularly beneficial at developing comfort, confidence, and empathy in a safe environment prior to practicing invasive procedures (Hilton & Barrett, 2008) or utilizing assessment skills in the clinical setting (Adefuye et al., 2022; Hattingh & Labuschagne, 2019; Wearn et al., 2013).

For students to have the opportunity to practice multiple repetitions of nursing procedures and get focused feedback, this policy outlines processes for safe and supportive implementation based on a student-centered framework, and with respect and adherence to student privacy and confidentiality principles.

Any concerns regarding this policy or its procedures, or the process of consenting to physical examination or invasive procedures, should be discussed with the Program Director and/or the Office of Student Affairs (Nursing Policy #033 Student Rights and Responsibilities; Heritage University Student Rights and Responsibilities).

Risks/Discomforts

Participation may create some anxiety for the student. Some of the procedures may create minor physical or psychological discomfort. Specific risks/discomforts are listed below. Low risk of infection but cleaning/antibacterial prevention techniques will be utilized for all procedures.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The following processes cover procedures of students by peers or instructors in all sanctioned HUND environments and contexts including but not limited to classes, open labs, and clinicals.

PARTICIPATION IN INVASIVE AND NON-INVASIVE PROCEDURES

Though all students are required to demonstrate proficiency in nursing procedure skills, no student is required to consent to be a recipient of nursing procedures. Declining participation in procedures by either a peer or instructor will have no impact on a student's grade, progression, or evaluation of competencies (Nursing Policy #018 Grading and Evaluation of Student Performance).

NON-INVASIVE PROCEDURES

Students and instructors may perform non-invasive procedures involving physical contact with students' head, neck, and limbs as typically exposed by t-shirts and shorts. The abdomen and thorax, exposed by lifting or removal of a shirt or use of a gown, may also be accessed. Non-invasive procedures that still include physical contact include but are not limited to:

- **Safe Patient Handling**
 - Bed transfers
 - Chair transfers
 - Positioning/rolling
- **Mobility**
 - Gait belt
 - Crutches, canes, and walkers
- **Hygiene**
 - Bed bath
 - Nail care
 - Feet washing
- **Hand massage**

Students and instructors will not perform any procedures on students' breasts, genitals, perineal, inguinal, or rectal areas for any reason in any sanctioned HUND context.

Children of nursing students will not be used for practice of any procedure for any reason in any sanctioned HUND context.

APPROVED INVASIVE PROCEDURES

NURSING PROCEDURE	SPECIFIC RISKS/DISCOMFORTS
Eye and Ear Drops (sterile water or saline)	Minimal discomfort, temporary cloudy vision, allergic reaction, infection
Feeding	Minimal discomfort, minimal exposure to saliva
Finger stick / capillary blood glucose	Discomfort related to needle insertion, bruising, infection, minimal exposure to blood
Intradermal injections (sterile saline)	Discomfort related to needle insertion, bruising, infection, minimal exposure to blood

Intramuscular injection (sterile saline)	Discomfort related to needle insertion, bruising, infection, minimal exposure to blood
Intravenous starts / venipuncture	Discomfort related to needle insertion, bruising, infection, exposure to blood
Oral hygiene	Minimal discomfort, minimal exposure to saliva or blood
Shaving (face, neck, forearm, and/or lower leg)	Skin irritation, infection, minimal exposure to blood
Subcutaneous injection (sterile saline)	Discomfort related to needle insertion, bruising, infection, minimal exposure to blood

Instructors will recruit willing volunteers for demonstration of nasogastric tube insertion.

No other invasive procedure may be performed on students for any reason in any context.

CONSENT

A student's explicit signed consent must be completed prior to any peer or instructor application of invasive procedures (see attached consent form), including:

- Acknowledgement of review and understanding of this policy and the consent form
- Specification of full consent, no consent, or partial consent

Verbal consent must be obtained by students and instructors before each instance of nursing procedures (Nursing Policy #009 Professionalism).

Students may decline to give consent for invasive procedures by instructors and peers. Students are not required to disclose their reasons for refusing consent.

Students may withdraw verbal consent for invasive procedures at any time. Students are not required to disclose their reasons for withdrawing consent.

If peer participation in invasive procedures is not possible within the student's group, other avenues to ensure that student learning is not compromised will be implemented.

INSTRUCTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Prior to demonstrating invasive procedures with students or observing students' peer practice of invasive procedures, instructors must complete a signed acknowledgement of review of this policy.

Instructors must not coerce students into consenting to invasive procedures. They should only invite students for demonstration purposes from those who have previously given consent.

ADVERSE EVENTS

Discovery of a Suspicious Finding

It is possible that a new suspicious finding may be discovered during practice of procedures, for example, discovery of a mass, rash, lesion, etc. In this instance, the following steps will be taken:

- 1) The examining student confidentially informs the student model of the suspicious finding.
- 2) The examining student determines whether the student model is already aware of the suspicious finding.
- 3) Both students confidentially inform their instructor.

- 4) The instructor asks permission to examine the student.
- 5) If the instructor confirms the suspicious finding, the instructor recommends that the student seeks medical advice.
- 6) The instructor reminds both students of the duty of the examining student to maintain confidentiality regarding the incident.

Breach of Confidentiality

Confidential information about a student may be revealed during practice of nursing procedures. Students may preemptively reveal a history of medical issues or known abnormalities, or application of a procedure may reveal suspicious findings. A breach of confidentiality would be a student or faculty sharing this information with anyone else without the explicit consent of the student.

The following steps will be taken in the case of a breach in confidentiality by a student:

- 1) The instructor speaks privately with the student(s) who breached confidentiality.
- 2) The instructor informs the student(s) that sharing confidential information without consent is an unacceptable breach of policy and standards.
- 3) The instructor contacts the Course Head and Nursing Director regarding the incident.
- 4) The Nursing Director takes appropriate actions reflective of guidelines in Nursing Policy #009 Professionalism.
- 5) The instructor ensures the student whose confidentiality was breached is informed of actions taken and, if required, seeks appropriate support (e.g. referral to the Office of Student Affairs).

Breach of student confidentiality by an instructor should be reported as soon as possible to the course head and Nursing Director, and/or Office of Student Affairs.

NOTE: students may offer or willingly provide explicit verbal consent to have their findings used for the instruction of others, which would not breach confidentiality.

Inappropriate Behavior

Inappropriate behavior may occur during nursing procedures by peers and instructors. If a student experiences or an instructor witnesses any instance of:

- perceived coercion
- nonconsensual touch
- breach of confidentiality
- other suspected inappropriate behavior

by either peer or instructor, they should report it as soon as possible to the course head, Nursing Director, Department Chair, and/or Office of Student Affairs. Students and faculty may also consider filing a complaint (Nursing Policy #041 Formal and Informal Complaints).

CITED AND RELATED POLICIES

Cited

- Nursing Policy #009 Professionalism
- Nursing Policy #018 Grading and Evaluation of Student Performance
- Nursing Policy #033 Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Nursing Policy #039 Dress Code
- Nursing Policy #041 Formal and Informal Complaints
- Heritage University Code of Conduct

- Heritage University Student Rights and Responsibilities

Related

- Nursing Policy #007 Faculty Responsibilities in the Clinical Setting

POLICY REVIEWERS

Proposed revisions of this policy should be reviewed by:

- 1) Bylaws, Policies, & Handbooks Committee [initiating committee]
- 2) Nursing Faculty Assembly
- 3) Office of Student Affairs

FORMS

- Consent to Participate in Peer and Instructor Invasive Procedures (attached)

WAC

Washington State Legislature. (2016). WAC 246-840-519. Student requirements in all approved nursing education programs. <https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=246-840-519>

REFERENCES

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Gromer, A.L., Patel, S.E., & Chesnut, S.R. (2025). Strategies for teaching psychomotor skills to undergraduate nursing students: a scoping review. *Teaching and Learning in Nursing*, 20(1), e98-e105. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.teln.2024.08.013>

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Nursing Director Signature:



