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REGULAR FEATURE

Ujuzi (Practical Pearl/*Perle Pratique*)



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Ujuzi means skills in Swahili and is intended to be a regular feature for colleagues to share practical interventions, innovations and novelties that have proved useful in the management of patients in the prehospital environment or Emergency Centre. You can let Ujuzi know about your practical ideas by emailing practicalpearl@afjem.com.

Tongue for pulse oximetry

Oxygen saturation monitoring is considered vital in the management of the acutely ill patient in the Emergency Centre (EC). However its use can be restricted due to the absence, or poor flow in extremities, most commonly when the patient is in a shocked state. In addition it will also be difficult when there are no appropriate appendices to connect it to; such as crush injuries to extremities [1].

Unbeknownst to many it is possible to perform the pulse oximetry from the tongue. The tongue has a rich vascular supply and due to its central location it provides an excellent signal even in a low flow states, unlike fingers or toes [2]. Using the adhesive type probe, simply ask the patient to extend the tongue and then apply the probe as seen in [Fig. 1](#).

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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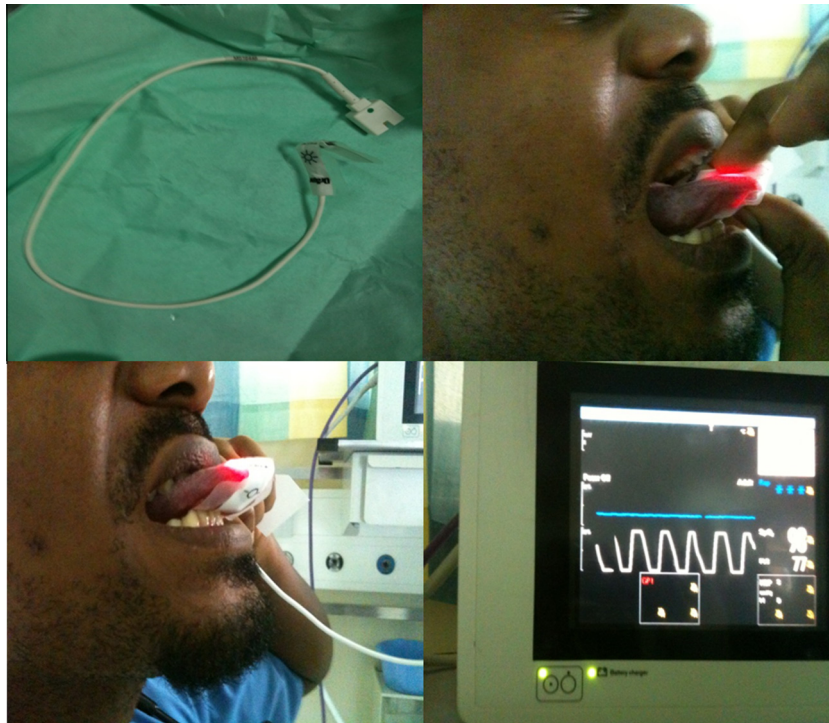


Figure 1 Positioning of pulse oximeter on the tongue.