



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: FETAL SCALP
ELECTRODES**
APPROVED DATE: 03/90
**REVISED DATES: 11/94, 11/01, 1/02, 1/06, 11/09
1/13, 7/14, 1/18**
ORIGINATING COMMITTEE:
SCOPE OF PRACTICE COMMITTEE

Within the Scope of Practice of RN LPN

ADVISORY OPINION AMNIOTOMY/FETAL SPIRAL ELECTRODES

It is NOT within the scope of practice for a registered nurse (RN) to perform an amniotomy.

It is within the scope of practice for an RN to apply and remove fetal spiral electrodes to a fetus if the membranes are ruptured and the following requirements listed below are met.

It is within the scope of practice for an RN who is educated, competent and when technology is not available, to apply fetal spiral electrode through intact membranes in urgent situations when fetal well-being is in question, or in the presence of an unreadable external fetal monitor tracing and the following requirements are met:

I. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- A. Written policy and procedures are maintained by the agency/employer
- B. Only RNs who have satisfactorily completed an agency's instructional program and have had supervised clinical practice are allowed to apply electrodes
- C. Documentation of satisfactory completion of the instructional program and demonstrated clinical proficiency is on file with the employer
- D. The patient must be in a labor and delivery setting
- E. The licensed independent practitioner (LIP) is notified

II. COURSE OF INSTRUCTION includes but is not limited to:

- A. Anatomy and physiology of the laboring patient and fetus
- B. Recognition and evaluation of fetal heart rate patterns
- C. Indications and contraindications for application of fetal spiral electrodes
- D. Potential adverse reactions for the fetus related to fetal spiral electrodes
- E. Technique for application and removal of spiral electrodes
- F. Nursing care responsibilities to the mother and fetus before, during, and after the placement and removal of fetal spiral electrodes

III. RATIONALE

To provide guidelines for an RN to deliver safe care to a mother and fetus during the labor and delivery process.

IV. REFERENCES

- American Academy of Pediatrics & American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. (2017). *Guidelines for perinatal care* (8th ed.). Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics &, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.
- Association of Women's Health, Obstetric, and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN). (2015). *Fetal heart monitoring: Principles and practices* (5th ed.) Dubuque, Iowa. Kendall-Hunt Publishing.
- Government of Western Australia Department of Health.. (2014). Fetal scalp electrode application. Retrieved from http://www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au/development/manuals/O&G_guidelines/sectionb/5/b5.6.1.pdf
- Miller, L., Miller, D., & Cypher R. (2016). *Mosby's pocket guide to fetal monitoring: A multidisciplinary approach* (8th ed.). St. Louis, MO: Elsevier Mosby.
- Simpson, K., & Creehan, P. (2014). *Perinatal nursing* (4th ed.). Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott. Williams & Wilkins.