HEART RATE—RESTING (ADULTS)

TEST POSITION

- Seated or supine; arm relaxed and supported by a comfortable surface or the examiner (Figure 1-1)

ACTION

- Index and middle fingertip pads lightly palpate the desired pulse points
- Radial or carotid pulse most commonly assessed; other pulse points include: temporal, brachial, femoral, popliteal, tibialis anterior, dorsalis pedis
- Count number of beats in 60 seconds
  - Shorter duration measurements increase error
    - 60-second count ± 1 beat/minute
    - 30-second count ± 2 beats/minute
    - 15-second count ± 4 beats/minute
    - 10-second count ± 6 beats/minute

NORMAL FINDINGS

- 60-100 beats/min
- <60 beats/minute in aerobically trained

POSITIVE FINDINGS

- Tachycardia (>100 beats/minute)
  - Suggestive of anemia, hyperthyroidism, fever, anxiety
- Bradycardia (<60 beats/minute)
  - Possibly due to sinus bradycardia, second-degree or complete heart block
- Skipped or extra beats
  - Premature atrial, nodal, or ventricular beats, sinus arrhythmia, second-degree heart block—Mobitz Type I

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Resting heart rate is often low in aerobically trained individuals
- Resting heart rate is often elevated during illness or following repetitive days of heavy work
- In hypertensive adults, single heart rate measurements made in the clinic were significantly higher (3.8 ± 8.0 beats/min) than