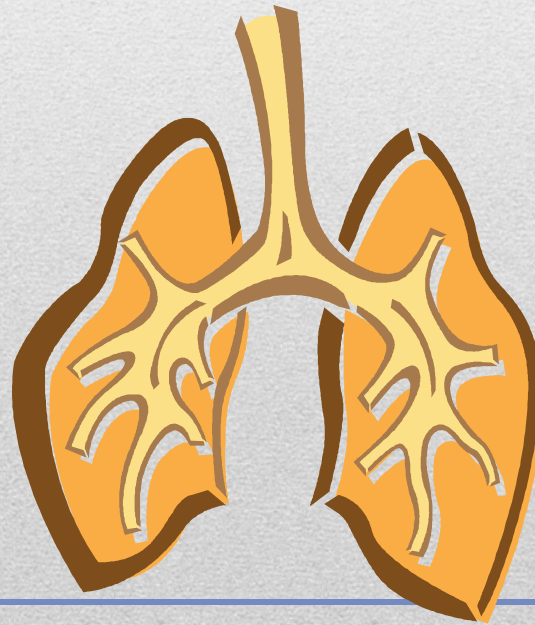


Respiratory System Assessment



Agenda

- Introduce:
 - How to describe breath sounds
 - What normal breath sounds are and sound like
 - What abnormal breath sounds are and sound like
-

Breath Sounds

A healthcare provider may describe breath sounds by:

- Location (where it is heard on the chest)
- Duration (length of time sound lasts)
- Intensity (how quiet or loud the sound may be)
- Pitch (how low or high the sound may be)
- Timing (when the sound occurs during the respiratory process)

Normal Breath Sounds

- **Normal breath sounds include:**
 - Bronchial
 - Loud, high-pitched breath sounds heard over the anterior chest by the 2nd and 3rd intercostal spaces
 - Bronchovesicular
 - Tubular, medium pitched sounds heard posteriorly between the scapulae, and anterior upper chest
 - Vesicular sounds
 - Soft, low-pitched, blowing breath sounds heard throughout the majority of lung fields
 - Tracheal
 - Harsh sounds heard when listening over the trachea

Abnormal Breath Sounds

Abnormal breath sounds are:

- When no sound is heard
- Normal breath sounds in abnormal places

Abnormal breath sounds include:

- Crackles (Rales)
- Wheezes (Rhonchi)
- Pleural friction rubs
- Stridor

Abnormal Breath Sounds

- Crackles (Rales)
 - Due to fluid buildup in small airways
 - May be fine (high-pitched, soft)
 - May be course (low-pitch, loud)
- Wheezes (Rhonchi)
 - Due to a constricted airway
 - May be a high-pitched shrill, or low-pitched snore
- Pleural friction rubs
 - Due to inflamed surfaces of the lung rubbing together
 - Grating, low-pitched noise
- Stridor
 - Due to an obstructed airway
 - Harsh, high-pitched

References

RnCeus Interactive LLC. (2007a). Normal breath sounds. Retrieved from <http://www.rnceus.com/resp/respnorm.html>

RnCeus Interactive LLC. (2007b). Abnormal breath sounds. Retrieved from <http://www.rnceus.com/resp/respabn.html>
