

# Pulse Diagnosis

## *Finger Techniques*

The pulse is not felt with the fingers completely still. They can be moved in several ways:

### **Searching**

Searching consists of finding the location of the dominant signal and then keeping the fingers still. This can be used to count the beats of the pulse to determine if the rate is rapid, slow, or normal.

### **Lifting**

Lifting consists of gently lifting the fingers to examine the superficial levels of the pulse. One can begin by pressing to the deepest levels and then lift through the middle level to the superficial level and notice any changes. This method can be used to determine if the pulse is floating, or if the pulse is deficient or normal at that level. It can also be used to evaluate the arrival of the wave.

### **Pressing**

Pressing consists of gently pressing the fingers downward to examine the deeper levels of the pulse. One can begin by lifting to the superficial level and then press through the middle level to the deep level and notice any changes. This method can be used to determine if the pulse is deep, or if the pulse is deficient or normal at that level. In the case of an irregular pulse, it can be used to ensure that a missed beat is truly a missed beat and not just a change in amplitude or force.

### **Pushing**

Pushing consists of gently moving the fingers side-to-side across the vessel (medial-lateral). The method lets one feel around the vessel and determine its shape. This can be used to determine the width of the vessel (thin vs. large) or the state of the vessel wall (e.g. wiry, tight, drumskin).

### **Rolling or Sliding**

Rolling consists of moving the fingers back and forth along the length of the vessel (proximal-distal). This method can be used to determine if the pulse is long or short.