OSCE Checklist: Recording an ECG

**Introduction**

1. Gather appropriate equipment
2. Wash your hands and don PPE if appropriate
3. Introduce yourself to the patient including your name and role
4. Confirm the patient’s name and date of birth
5. Briefly explain what the procedure will involve using patient-friendly language
6. If the patient is a female, explain the need for a chaperone
7. Gain consent to proceed with the ECG recording
8. Adequately expose the patient’s chest for the procedure (offer a blanket to allow exposure only when required). Exposure of the patient’s lower legs and wrists is also necessary to apply the limb leads.
9. Ask the patient to lay on the clinical examination couch with the head of the couch at a 45° angle
10. Ask the patient if they have any pain before proceeding with the clinical procedure

**Chest electrode and lead placement**

11. Apply V1 at the 4th intercostal space at the right sternal edge
12. Apply V2 at the 4th intercostal space at the left sternal edge
13. Apply V3 midway between the V2 and V4 electrodes
14. Apply V4 at the 5th intercostal space in the midclavicular line
15. Apply V5 at the left anterior axillary line at the same horizontal level as V4
16. Apply V6 at the left mid-axillary line at the same horizontal level as V4 and V5

**Limb electrode and lead placement**

17. Apply the red lead on the right forearm, proximal to the wrist
18. Apply the yellow lead on the left forearm, proximal to the wrist
19. Apply the green lead on the left lower leg, proximal to the ankle
20. Apply the black lead on the right lower leg, proximal to the ankle

**Recording the trace**

21. Turn on the ECG machine and ensure ECG paper has been loaded into the machine
22. Double-check all the electrodes are attached in the appropriate locations
23. Politely ask the patient to remain still and not talk during the recording as muscle activity can cause an artefact which obscures the ECG trace of myocardial activity
24. Press the appropriate button on the ECG machine to record the ECG trace. If the ECG trace is poor, double-check the connections to ensure there is good skin contact.
# To complete the procedure...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Task</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Once an ECG trace has been obtained, switch off the ECG machine</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Detach the ECG leads from the electrodes and then remove the electrodes carefully, warning the patient this may feel uncomfortable</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Explain to the patient that the procedure is now finished</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>Thank the patient for their time</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Dispose of PPE appropriately and wash your hands</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>Label the ECG with the patient's details</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>Document your findings in the patient's notes</td>
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