Repeat the procedure for the other arm. Note the rate, rhythm, amplitude, and symmetry of the pulses.

Characteristics of peripheral pulse are included in Box 18.1.

**Box 18.1  Assessing Peripheral Pulses**

Assess peripheral pulses by palpating with gentle pressure over the artery. Use the pads of your first three fingers.

Note the following characteristics:
- **Rate**—the number of beats per minute
- **Rhythm**—the regularity of the beats
- **Symmetry**—pulses on both sides of body should be similar
- **Amplitude**—the strength of the beat, assessed on a scale of 0 to 4:
  - 4 = Bounding
  - 3 = Increased
  - 2 = Normal
  - 1 = Weak
  - 0 = Absent or nonpalpable

It is not necessary to palpate the ulnar pulses, located medial to the ulna on the flexor surface of the wrist. They are deeper than the radial pulses and are difficult to palpate.

If any pulses are difficult to palpate, a Doppler flowmeter should be used. When positioned over a patent artery, this device emits sound waves as the blood moves through the artery.

Palpate both brachial pulses.

- The brachial pulses are found just medial to the biceps tendon.
- Ask the client to extend the arm.
- Palpate over the brachial artery just superior to the antecubital region (see Figure 18.10 ●).

Repeat the procedure for the other arm.

Note the rate, rhythm, amplitude, and symmetry of the pulses.

Grade the amplitude on the 4-point scale as before.