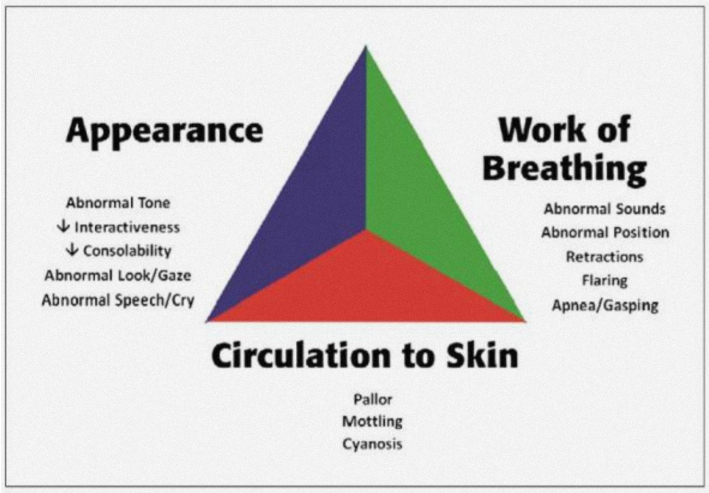
Pediatric Assessment Triangle (PAT) is a rapid evaluation tool that establishes childs status and his or her category of illness to direct initial management priorities.

Providers makes observation of 3 components

- Appearance
- Work of breathing
- Circulation to the skin



Appearance

- This arm reflects a child's age, stage of development and ability to interact with the environment.
- TICLS Mnemonic
    - Tone
    - Interactiveness
    - Consolability
    - Look or Gaze
    - Speech or cry

Work of Breathing

- Describes the child's respiratory status, degree to which the child must work to oxygenate and ventilate.
- Look for
    - Abnormal airway sound : Stridor, grunting & wheeze
    - Abnormal position
    - Retractions or flaring of nostril on inspiration

Circulation to the skin

- Reflects the general perfusion of blood throughout the body.
- Look for
    - Skin color & perfusion (Pallor, cyanosis or mottling)

Abnormality in any of the arms of PAT demotes an unstable child. The pattern categorizes children into five different categories .

Components of the Pediatric Assessment Triangle and the general impression

	Appearance	Work of breathing	Circulation to skin
Stable	Normal	Normal	Normal
Respiratory distress	Normal	Abnormal	Normal
Respiratory failure	Abnormal	Abnormal	Normal
Shock	Normal or Abnormal	Normal	Abnormal
Central nervous system/metabolic disturbance	Abnormal	Normal	Normal
Cardiopulmonary failure	Abnormal	Abnormal	Abnormal

Updated on 17/10/2023

Reference

- Horeczko T, Enriquez B, McGrath NE, Gausche-Hill M, Lewis RJ. The Pediatric Assessment Triangle: accuracy of its application by nurses in the triage of children. J Emerg Nurs. 2013 Mar;39(2):182-9. doi: 10.1016/j.jen.2011.12.020. Epub 2012 Jul 24. PMID: 22831826; PMCID: PMC4318552.