

Electromyography (EMG) and Nerve Conduction Studies (NCS)

Read this booklet to learn:

- what EMG and NCS are
- how to prepare
- what to expect
- who to call if you have any questions

You have been scheduled for:

an EMG

an NCS

Date: _____ Time: _____

Come to:

Toronto Western Hospital
399 Bathurst Street, Toronto M5T 2S8
Neurophysiology Lab
Fell Pavilion - 4th floor (Room 435)



What are EMG and NCS?

Electromyography (EMG) and nerve conduction studies (NCS) are also called electrodiagnostic tests. These tests help us study and find problems with how your nerves and muscles work together. They can help find the reasons you may have:

- numbness
- tingling
- pain
- weakness or fatigue (feel very tired)
- muscle cramps

An EMG checks how well your muscles work. NCS check how fast and well a signal travels along your nerves. During your appointment, your doctor will examine you and decide whether you need 1 or both tests.

Your appointment may take from 1 to 3 hours.

How do I prepare for these tests?

- ✓ Bring your health card (OHIP card) to your appointment. If you don't have an OHIP card, please bring another form of government-issued photo ID (such as a driver's licence, passport, or other provincial health card).

Important: If you don't bring your OHIP card or photo ID, we may have to reschedule your appointment.

- ✓ You can eat and do your normal activities before and after your appointment.
- ✓ If you have myasthenia gravis (a medical problem that causes your muscles to tire and weaken easily), don't take Mestinon the night before

your test. This will help make the results of your test more clear.

- ✓ Don't use any skin lotions before your appointment.
- ✓ Wear loose clothes. You may need to change into a hospital gown, depending on which test you need.
- ✓ Come to the Neurophysiology Lab on time.

Before they examine you, tell the doctor if you:

- are taking blood thinners or have hemophilia
- have a cardiac pacemaker or use a transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulator (TENS) unit
- have myasthenia gravis

What can I expect during the EMG?

1. You to lie on a bed.
2. The doctor puts a very small needle into a muscle to record its electrical activity. This needle only records information. It doesn't draw blood or inject you with anything. You may feel a slight prick and mild tingling from the electric pulses.
3. The doctor may test different muscles, depending on your symptoms.

It happens rarely, but you may get some small bruises where the needles went in.

What can I expect during the NCS?

1. You to lie on a bed.
2. We put small disks (electrodes) at different places along a nerve or muscle. Then we send short electric pulses to your nerve. You may feel a mild tingling that doesn't last long.
3. The doctor may need to test many nerves, depending on your symptoms.

What about my test results?

The neurologist will look at your results and send them to the doctor that referred you for these tests. This usually takes about 2 weeks

Who do I call if I have any questions?

If you have any questions please call your doctor or the Neurophysiology Lab at:

- Phone: 416 603 5800 extension 2060
- Fax: 416 603 7096

Please tell us at least 48 hours before your appointment if you need to cancel.



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