



Neurological Examination

Sensory Examination

OBJECTIVE: To conduct a complete Sensory Examination as a part of Neurological Examination.

MATERIALS: Well illuminated examination room, examination table, clean gloves, tendon hammer, Ophthalmoscope, penlight, tuning fork, pins and needles, brush, a piece of cotton wool.

D: Appropriately done PD: Partially done ND: Not done/Incorrectly done

STEP/TASK	D	PD	ND
Preparation			
1. Introduce yourself to the patient.			
2. Confirm patient's ID.			
3. Explain the procedure and reassure the patient.			
4. Get patient's consent.			
5. Wash hands.			
6. Prepare the necessary materials.			
7. Show the patient each object and allow him/her to touch the pin/needle, brush and cotton prior to beginning the exam to reduce any fear of being hurt during the examination.			
8. Position the patient in a lying or sitting position and uncover arms and legs.			
Examination			
9. Pain (pinprick) testing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the patient to close his/her eyes. • Demonstrate to the patient "sharp" and "dull" sensation by touching a normal area (<i>e.g. lower arm</i>) with a new pin/needle and brush. • Instruct the patient to say "sharp" or "dull" when they feel the respective object. • Begin proximally and apply alternate touching the patient with the needle and the brush at intervals (~5 sec). • Test each dermatome comparing left and right sides. (<i>Make certain to instruct the patient to tell the physician if they notice a difference in the strength of sensation on each side of their body.</i>)			
10. Light-touch testing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the patient to close his/her eyes. • Instruct the patient to say "yes" when the touch is felt. • Begin proximally and apply touch to the skin of the patient with a wisp of cotton wool. (<i>Do not stroke skin because this moves hair fibres.</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test each dermatome comparing left and right sides. 			
11. Vibration testing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the patient to close his/her eyes. • Place a vibrating 128 Hz tuning fork (<i>not a 256 or 512 Hz fork</i>) on one distal interphalangeal joints (<i>patient should be able to describe a feeling of vibration</i>). • Ask the patient to inform you when the vibration stops. • Deadend the vibrations of the tuning fork with your hand (<i>patient should be able to say exactly when it occurs</i>). • Compare one side with the other. 			
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STEP/TASK	D	PD	ND
Preparation			
12. Position sense (Proprioception) testing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the patient has no problem with interphalangeal joints (<i>e.g. pain, arthritis etc.</i>) • While holding one of his/her fingers by its sides, demonstrate to the patient "up" and "down" sensation by moving one of his/her distal interphalangeal joints. • Instruct the patient to identify the direction of each movement as "up" or "down". • Ask the patient to close his/her eyes. • Apply same movement on different fingers and directions a couple of times. 			
After the examination			
13. Ensure that the patient is comfortable.			
14. Make explanations to the patient, answer his/her questions and discuss management plan.			
15. Dispose of sharps and waste material according to infection control standards.			
16. Wash hands.			
17. Document the procedure.			