

ELECTROMYOGRAPHIC EXAMINATION

Introduction:

An electromyogram (EMG) is an examination of your nerves and muscles performed by a physician. It is usually a two-part evaluation consisting of first, a nerve conduction study and second, a muscle examination.

Preparation for EMG:

Under most circumstances, there is no specific preparation. We do ask that you do not apply liberal amounts of body lotion prior to the examination as it may effect results. We like to know if you have a cardiac pacemaker, electrical stimulator or take an anticoagulant, as we may modify the examination.

The examination itself: what to expect:

The nerve conduction study (NCS) is performed by placing electrodes on your skin which record the response of a nerve when we apply a brief electrical stimulus to it. Several brief pulses of varying intensity are usually given and measurements recorded. These nerve responses are then measured to understand how fast and how well your nerves conduct electrical messages. Many nerves in the body – face, arms or legs – may be tested in this way.

Muscle examination testing is done by inserting a thin needle electrode into a muscle. No shocks are given since the needle detects electrical activity produced by the muscle. This activity is displayed on a screen and played over a loudspeaker so that we can both see and hear this activity.

Needles used for this part of the examination are sterilized and have never been used before. They are discarded after the examination is completed.

The time required to complete an EMG varies depending upon the problem you have and the information requested by your physician.

A report of the results is formulated, transcribed and sent to those physicians involved in your health care.

Are there any complications:

This test is safe, although there may be some discomfort associated with the procedures. Complications, including local bruises, are minor, temporary and not serious. At the time of the procedure we will be happy to answer any questions you may have.