

# EMG / NCS Test: Patient Instructions

## **Please note:**

- **EMG studies are done only at the TELECOM office in Temple Terrace**
- **Please arrive at least 15 minutes before your appointment**
- **If you anticipate being late for your appointment by more than 15 minutes, please call to reschedule your appointment**
- **If you need to cancel your appointment, please do so at least 24-48 hours in advance.**

## **What is an EMG /NCS Test?**

Electromyography (EMG) is a diagnostic procedure to assess the health of muscles and nerves. Neurons transmit electrical signals that cause muscles to contract. An EMG translates these signals into graphs, sounds or numerical values that a specialist interprets. An EMG uses tiny devices called electrodes to transmit or detect electrical signals.

During a needle EMG, a needle electrode is inserted directly into a muscle which records the electrical activity in that muscle.

A nerve conduction study (NCS), another part of an EMG, uses electrodes taped to the skin to measure the speed and strength of signals traveling between two or more points.

Both tests may result in some discomfort, but are usually well tolerated.

EMG testing can provide your doctor with specific information about the extent of nerve and /or muscle injury and may also determine the location of nerve injury and problems with nerve to muscle signal transmission.

## **How to prepare for your EMG /NCS test**

Eat your normal meal on the day of the test and continue any medication you are taking unless otherwise instructed. Take a shower or bath before your exam in order to remove oils from your skin. Do not apply creams/ lotions/ oils on hands, arms, legs and feet. Remove all jewelry (rings or bracelets) and wrist watch.

## **Please try to keep your hands and feet warm before the test.**

The doctor conducting the EMG NCS test will need to know if you have certain medical conditions.

Please inform him / her if you:

- Have a heart pacemaker/ implanted defibrillator or any other electrical medical device
- Take blood thinning medications i.e. Coumadin, Plavix, Xarelto or Eliquis. Please hold blood thinners (anticoagulants) for three days prior to the exam if permitted by your prescribing physician. Aspirin is permitted without change.
- Have hemophilia, a blood clotting disorder that causes prolonged bleeding

## **What are the risks of EMG /NCS testing?**

EMG is a low risk procedure, and complications are rare. There is a small risk of bleeding and infection where the needle electrode is inserted.

## **What do I expect after an EMG/NCS test?**

You may experience some muscle soreness and temporary minor bruising where the needle electrode is inserted into your muscle. This bruising should fade in several days. If it persists, contact your primary care doctor.

A report that includes the results and an interpretation will be sent to your doctor who will discuss the results with you.