

Patient information factsheet

Nerve conduction studies (NCS)

A nerve conduction study measures how long it takes for a nerve impulse to travel along a nerve. If the nerve is trapped, damaged or diseased then these signals will be slow.

You have been sent an appointment for your test and we have provided the following information so you know how to prepare and what to expect.

If you have a cardiac pacemaker or implanted defibrillator, please telephone us before your appointment.

Attending your test

Please ensure you arrive on time and allow at least one hour for the test. If you arrive late it may be necessary to rebook your appointment.

When attending your test please:

- keep your hands and feet warm, especially in cold weather - nerves conduct messages more slowly when cooled so this could affect the results of your test
- wear loose comfortable clothing
- do not wear jewellery
- do not use any creams on your skin as this can interfere with the recording

During the test

To obtain measurements of your nerve impulses a recording electrode will be placed onto your skin, usually on your upper and/or lower limbs. Another electrode will be used to stimulate the nerve. The stimulator produces small electrical pulses which feel like a sharp tapping sensation. The process will be repeated for a number of different nerves.

Although the test can be uncomfortable, and some people experience a slight increase in their usual symptoms for a few minutes afterwards, the test will not cause you any harm.

After the test

The specialist physiologist performing your test will not be able to give you a result immediately after the test is completed. The results need to be analysed and a full medical report will be sent to your doctor.

Further information

Please feel free to contact the department if there is any information you do not understand. If your appointment is not convenient please ring us as soon as possible to rearrange it.

Clinical neurophysiology department
Wessex Neurological Centre
B level, Southampton General Hospital
Tremona Road
Southampton
SO16 6YD

Telephone: 023 8120 6785
(8am to 4.30pm, or please leave a message on the answer machine).

If you need a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or on audio tape, please telephone 023 8120 4688 for help.