

Patient information factsheet

Nerve conduction studies (NCS)

We have given you this factsheet because you are due to have a nerve conduction study. It explains what a nerve conduction study is, how to prepare and what to expect during the test. We hope it will answer any questions you may have. If you have any further questions, please contact a member of the team using the details at the end of this factsheet.

Your doctor has referred you to the neurophysiology team to have this test. Your appointment letter will give you details of your appointment date and other useful information.

What is an NCS?

An NCS or nerve conduction study measures how your nerves respond to small electrical pulses. If there is a problem with your nerves (such as being trapped, damaged or diseased), these measurements may help us to assess and diagnose the problem.

Attending your test

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

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, we will:

- place a recording electrode (small sensor) onto your skin, usually on your upper and/or lower limbs
- another electrode will be used to stimulate the nerve
- the stimulator will produce 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 several minutes afterwards, the test will not cause you any harm.

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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 report will be sent to the doctor that referred you for this test.

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.

Contact us

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

Telephone: **023 8120 6785** (Monday to Friday 8am to 4.30pm)

If we're unable to answer your call, please leave a message on the answer machine with your name, hospital number and a brief reason for your call. We will return your call as soon as possible.

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