

## Electromyography (EMG) Test

### Why are you being sent to the EMG Lab for tests?

You may have a problem that is related to your nerves and muscles. This is based on problems of numbness, tingling, weakness, or muscle cramping that you have discussed with your provider.

The EMG test usually has two parts:

- Nerve Conduction Studies
- Needle examination

The specific nerves and muscles tested will depend on the type of problem that you are having. It may be different from person to person.

The EMG is a test that has been ordered by your family doctor. The test is not the same as a neurologic consultation. The test results may not explain your symptoms. It may be helpful to rule out some nerve problems. Or it may help your doctor look for other reasons for the symptoms. You will want to discuss the EMG results with your doctor to decide what other tests or treatments may be needed.

### Who performs the needle electromyogram (EMG) and nerve conduction study?

A doctor will do needle EMG testing. A trained technologist may perform nerve conduction studies with a doctor's supervision.

### Needle EMG

Small, thin needles will be placed in several muscles. The doctor will be able to hear and see how your muscles and nerves are working by analyzing the electrical signals. There may be a small amount of pain during this part of the test. Only the muscles necessary to decide what is wrong will be tested. The doctor uses this information to diagnose your problem.

### Nerve Conduction Study (NCS)

Nerve conduction studies show how well the body's electrical signals are traveling in a nerve. This is done by applying small electrical shocks to the nerve and recording how the nerve responds. These shocks cause a quick, mild, tingling feeling. The doctor may test several nerves.

### How should you prepare for the tests?

- Tell the EMG doctor if you are taking aspirin, blood thinners (like Coumadin®), have a pacemaker, or have hemophilia.
- Take a bath or shower the morning of my test to remove oil from your skin.
- Do not use body lotion on the day of the test.

- If you have myasthenia gravis, you will ask the EMG doctor if you should take any medicines before the test.

**How long will the tests take?**

The tests usually take 20 to 90 minutes. There are no lasting side effects. You can do your normal activities after the tests.

**When will you know the test results?**

The EMG doctor will discuss your test results with you when the study has been completed. You will want to make arrangements to discuss the results with your family doctor. The information from the EMG will usually be available to your family doctor on-line within an hour of completing your appointment.