

EMG / NCS - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is an EMG/NCS test?

An EMG-NCS is a test of the nerves and muscles of your arms / legs. The EMG/NCS study examines the integrity of the peripheral nerves and muscles of the body. The study does NOT examine the brain or spinal cord. It is important to realize that you can have a nerve or muscle problem, even though you may not "think" you have any nerve or muscle problems. This test does NOT measure pain. You may have a normal EMG-NCS study, even though you have severe pain.

What are the different parts of the study?

The study is usually done in two parts: (1) NCS, and (2) EMG (i.e. "needle" exam).

How long is the study?

Each EMG/NCS study varies from patient to patient, depending on what results are obtained. As such, the study may take as little as 20 minutes, or as much as 2 hours.

What is the Nerve Conduction Study or NCS?

The NCS involves examining the nerves in your arms and legs. This consists of attaching wires to the surface of your skin, and administering a small "shock" to see how well the nerves react and function. These results are monitored on a computer.

What is the Electromyography or EMG?

The EMG examines the muscle activity in your body. This study consists of inserting a sterile, individually wrapped, needle into your various muscles and monitoring their activity. These results are monitored on a computer. You will probably be stuck 5-7 times per arm or leg. There is NO shocking during the EMG.

Is the test painful?

The "shocks" during the NCS are not painful, although they may feel slightly uncomfortable. The needle "sticks" during the EMG feels like a small ant bite, and can sometimes be uncomfortable, but not painful.

How do I prepare for the test?

Please DO NOT use any Lotion or Creams on the day of the test. Such Lotions or Creams will make it difficult to perform the study. Please notify the physician PRIOR to the study if:

- ... (1) you think you may have AIDS or Hepatitis, or
- ... (2) if you are taking any blood thinners, such as Coumadin or Aspirin

What type of clothing should I wear?

Men - if possible, wear shorts and T-shirt.

Women - if possible, wear a loose dress and T-shirt.

***** Please remove any watches or rings you might be wearing on BOTH your hands / fingers. *****

When will I get the results of the test?

If you are an active patient of our office, then the EMG-NCS results will be discussed with you on your next office visit. If you have come to our office only for the EMG-NCS, then the results will be sent to your referring physician within 48 hours. They will discuss the results with you on your next office visit with them.

Will the doctor advise me of any treatment options?

If Dr. Athni is actively involved in your care, then the results will be discussed on your next office visit.

But, if you have come to our office only for the EMG/NCS, then the report will be sent to your referring physician within 2 business days. They will advise you of the results, and counsel you on your treatment plan.