

Guidelines for a Comprehensive Neurologic Examination

All medical students should be able to perform the following parts of the neurological exam.

A. Mental Status

1. Level of alertness
2. Language function (fluency, comprehension, repetition, naming, reading and writing)
3. Memory (short-term and long-term)
4. Calculation
5. Visuospatial processing
6. Abstract reasoning

B. Cranial Nerves

1. Vision (visual fields, visual acuity, and fundoscopic examination)
2. Pupillary light reflex
3. Eye movements
4. Facial sensation
5. Facial strength (muscles of facial expression and muscles of facial expression)
6. Hearing
7. Palatal movement
8. Speech
9. Neck movements (head rotation, shoulder elevation)
10. Tongue (bulk, voluntary movement, presence of any involuntary movements at rest)

C. Motor Function

1. Bulk
2. Tone (resistance to passive manipulation)
3. Pronator Drift
4. Strength (shoulder abduction, elbow flexion/extension, wrist flexion/extension, finger flexion/extension/abduction, hip flexion/extension, knee flexion/extension, ankle dorsiflexion/plantar flexion)
5. Involuntary movements

D. Reflexes

1. Deep tendon reflexes (biceps, triceps, brachioradialis, patellar, Achilles)
2. Plantar responses

E. Sensation

1. Light touch
2. Pain or temperature
3. Proprioception
4. Vibration
5. Romberg

F. Coordination

1. Fine finger movements
2. Rapid alternating movements
3. Finger-to-nose (or finger-to-chin) and heel-knee-shin

G. Gait

1. Casual
2. Toes and heels
3. Tandem