

EMG (Electromyogram)

EMG

Your doctor wants you to have a test to tell how well your nerves and muscles are working. An EMG (electromyogram) test converts the electrical activity of a muscle when it is contracted (tight) and relaxed. The EMG gets information that X-ray, CT or MRI tests cannot get.

A doctor will do the test. The test takes 15 to 60 minutes.

Before the Test

- You may eat your normal foods.
- You may take your regular medicines.
- Do not put any lotions, powders or oils on the part of your body being tested.
- Wear loose-fitting clothing.
- Do not wear jewelry.
- Tell the technician if you:
 - had a mastectomy
 - have a pacemaker
 - take blood thinners.
- You will be asked to wear a gown if you have an EMG in your shoulder, neck or lower back area.

Your Test

Date: _____

Time: _____

Where to go: _____

If you need to cancel your test, please call at least 24 hours in advance.

During the Test

You will need to lie still and relax as much as possible. Tell a member of your health care team if you need to rest or change positions.

- You will lie on a bed or reclining chair on either your back or stomach.
- A technician will tape small electrodes to the area to be tested. A safe, very low level of electricity will travel to the electrodes to stimulate your nerves.
- You will receive a number of short shocks of electricity. Some will be more intense than others. Equipment will measure how fast the nerves transmit electricity.

(over)

- The doctor will insert a tiny needle (the size of a pin) into the muscles being tested to record muscle activity.

Each time, you will be asked to relax and then move in a certain way to make the muscle tighten. You may feel slight discomfort when the needle is inserted or when your nerves are stimulated.

- The muscle's electrical activity will be recorded. This will show how fast impulses travel along the nerve, and the activity of your muscle. If the nerve or muscle has a disease or injury, your doctor will see this through the EMG activity.

After the Test

- You may return to your normal routine.
- This test has no side effects.
- A doctor will review and interpret the results of your EMG.
- Your doctor will receive a written report of the results.
- You will receive the results from your doctor. Call him or her in 7 days if you haven't heard anything.