

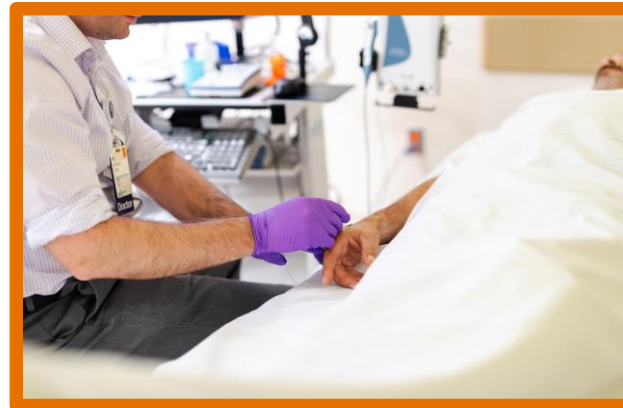
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# What to Expect During an EMG: A Guide



# What is EMG Testing?

- An electromyography, or an EMG test measures the electrical activity in your muscles. EMGs help diagnose conditions that affect muscle function and nerve signals, such as:
  - **Nerve disorders:** Conditions like carpal tunnel syndrome or peripheral neuropathy.
  - **Muscle disorders:** Diseases like muscular dystrophy or myopathy.
  - **Nerve-to-Muscle communication issues:** Conditions like myasthenia gravis.
- Most EMG studies include nerve conduction studies and the EMG test.



# EMG Preparation

- You may eat, drink and take prescribed medications as usual before the test, except **Mestinon** (Pyridostigmine). DO NOT take **Mestinon** (Pyridostigmine) for 24 hours prior to your appointment date.
- Avoid applying body lotion on the day of your test.
- Please reschedule your appointment if you are experiencing excessive coughing, sneezing or if you have a fever higher than 100°.
- Please arrive 15 minutes before your EMG appointment is scheduled and check in at the Registration Office on the first floor of the Primary Care Center.
- Please proceed to the EMG lab, on the ground floor of the Primary Care Center, to check in.
- Please use the bathroom prior to your technologist bringing you back to the testing area.
- Silence your cell phone during testing.

# What Happens During the EMG?

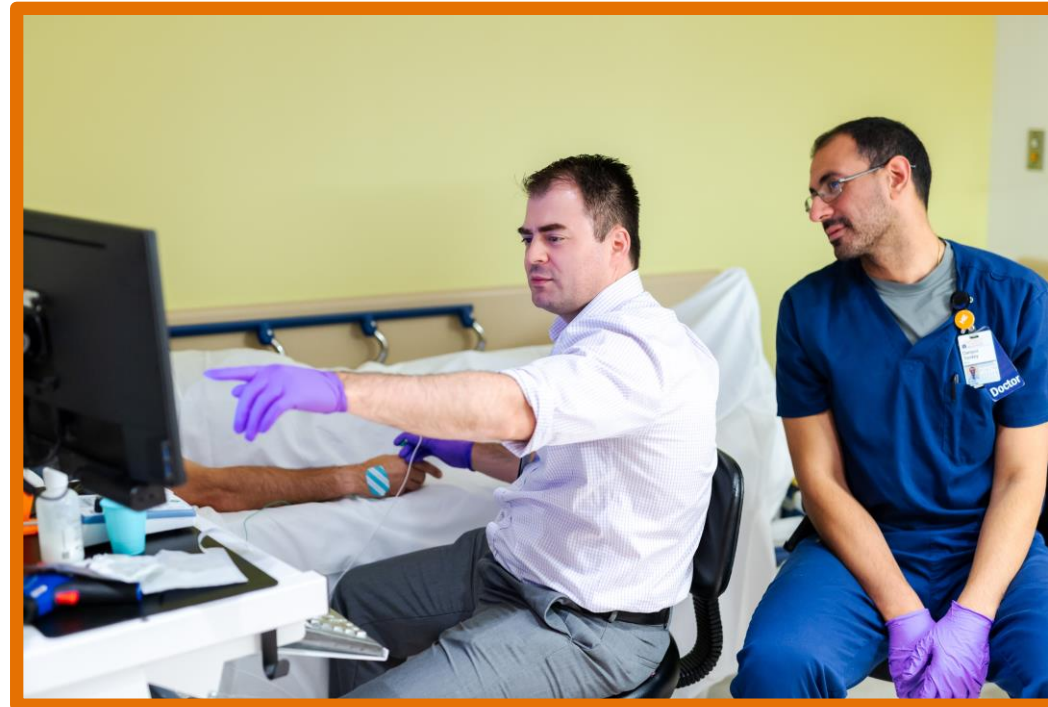
- You will be escorted to an EMG exam room and asked to change into a gown to accommodate requested testing. A doctor (usually a neurologist) or a technologist may speak to you prior to testing and possibly do a quick physical exam.
- Depending on circumstances, you might be asked to place your hands or feet in warm water, or wear a warm blanket. Maintaining your body warmth helps make the EMG results more accurate.
- **For the Nerve Conduction Study:** A clinician will tape electrodes on the surface of your skin – usually on your hands and/or feet. The clinician will then stimulate the nerve with a small electrical impulse (a small “shock” that will often make your muscles twitch).
- **For the EMG test:** A doctor will insert a small needle into several muscles. This will allow the doctor to detect the electrical signals those muscles produce and better understand how your muscles and nerves are working. The number of muscles the doctor needs to test will depend on what they see while examining each muscle and what your referring doctor needs to learn.
- **EMGs** typically take 60-90 minutes.
- **After the test** you might experience some soreness or bruising at the needle insertion site. This should go away after a day or two.
- **If the soreness doesn't resolve**, you may contact your referring provider or call the EMG Lab at 434-924-2706 for further advice.

# What is a Single Fiber EMG?

- A single-fiber EMG is a specialized test that examines the electrical activity of individual muscle fibers.
- **Why do I need a single-fiber EMG?** You might need a single-fiber EMG to diagnose a condition where the communication between the nerves and muscles are affected, such as myasthenia gravis.
- **What happens during the procedure?** A very thin needle will be inserted to a specific muscle.
- **What does a single-fiber EMG feel like?** You might feel a small prick or discomfort when the needle is inserted. The test is generally well-tolerated.
- **How long does the test take?** The test itself usually takes 20-30 minutes. During this time, you'll be asked to perform certain movements or stay still as the electrical activity is recorded.
- **After the test** you might experience some soreness or bruising at the needle insertion site, but it should go away on its own.

# What Happens after the Test?

- After the EMG, the doctor will analyze and interpret the data and will send a copy of the report to the physician who referred you to the test.
- If you would like results sent elsewhere, you may contact Medical Records at 434-924-5136 to request sharing the results.



# Helpful Links

- Adult Neurology and Neuromuscular Clinic: [Neuromuscular Disorders - Department of Neurology \(virginia.edu\)](#)
- EMG Lab contact information: [Electromyography \(EMG\) | UVA Health](#)
- Medical Records Release of Information: [030105 Authorization for UVA Health Information Release of Medical Information.pdf \(virginia.edu\)](#)
- Free shuttle at UVA Health: [Free Shuttle at UVA Health Med. Ctr. : Routes & Schedules | UVA Health](#)
- Maps/directions: [Visiting UVA Health Medical Center | UVA Health](#)

# Parking

- Please park in the Lee Street Parking Garage, located at 121 11<sup>th</sup> Street, SW, Charlottesville, VA.
- If you need valet parking, pull in the front entrance circle of the Main Hospital. The address at UVA Health is 1215 Lee Street, Charlottesville, VA.





