NCS/CTS Upper Limb Nerve Conduction Studies / Carpal Tunnel Screen

What is a nerve conduction study?

A nerve conduction study is a test on the nerves in the arms and hands. It is a test that measures how quickly messages are travelling along your nerves. The speed at which the nerves are working can give information about whether a nerve is trapped or damaged. The test takes up to 45 minutes to complete and your results will be sent to the referring GP/clinician usually within 2 weeks.

How is the test performed?

The studies are performed by passing small electrical currents through the skin and making recordings of the natural electrical signals further down the nerve or over a muscle. The electrical signals produce a pulsing, tingling sensation, which can be uncomfortable, but should not be painful. Some of the pulses will make your muscle briefly twitch. There are no aftereffects and you will be able to go home or to work/school following the test.

How do I prepare for the test?

Do not use hand lotions or creams. Please wear loose fitting clothing that can be rolled up to the upper arm.

Your hands need to be warm for the test; however, you will be offered a hand warmer upon arrival in the department.

Bracelets, rings and watches should be removed for tests on the hands. If you are unable to remove a ring, please do not have it cut off, we will be able to work around it.

If you are taking any medication, please continue to take it and bring a list of your medication with you. You may continue to eat meals as normal.

Please inform the physiologist at the **START** of your test if you have been fitted with a **pacemaker**.