

5 minute Neurology Exam for patients with suspected DCI

Examination of the patients central nervous system soon after an diving accident may provide valuable information to the supervising diving physician. Work through the following examination, completing as many tests as you can and putting a cross next to any abnormal findings. There is further space to record results overleaf. When Testing Sensation, ensure the patients eyes are closed and lightly touch their skin with cotton wool or something similar and ask them to say “yes” each time they feel it, while the results from the exam are useful do not delay transportation to carry out the exam.

1. Orientation

- a. Person: Can the patient tell you his or her own name and date of birth.
- b. Place: Is the patient aware of where they are.
- c. Time: Does the patient know the date or approx. what time it is.

Even though a patient may appear alert, the answers to these questions may reveal confusion.

2. Eyes

- a. Eye Movements: Can the patient follow your finger as you draw an “H” shape, eye movements should be smooth and not jerky.
- b. Vision: Can the patient count fingers held up in front of them. Test each eye in turn then both eyes together.
- c. Pupils: Check they are equal in size and shrink in response to light.

3. Ears

- a. Hearing: Rub your thumb and finger together 30cm from the patients ear, check they can hear this on each side. Be aware that if the surroundings are noisy, this test is difficult to evaluate.

4. Face

- a. Sensation: Test several points on both sides of the face.
- b. Movements: Get the patient to do the following in turn - raise eyebrows, screw up eyes tightly and show teeth.

5. Mouth

- a. Movements: Get the patient to do the following - stick out tongue (tongue should not deviate to either side). Can the patient swallow a sip of water? If they choke keep them nil by mouth.

6. Torso

- a. Sensation: Test several points on both sides of the torso.

7. Upper limb

- a. Sensation: Test several points on both arms and shoulders.
- b. Movements: Get the patient to do the following in turn, note any difference in strength between sides - shrug shoulders against resistance, straighten and bend the elbows against resistance and squeeze fingers.

8. Lower Limb

- a. Sensation: Test several points on both legs.
- b. Movements: Get the patient to do the following in turn, note any difference in strength between sides - raise and lower the entire leg against resistance, straighten and bend the knee against resistance.

Examination Findings:

Time of Examination : Normal exam Abnormal exam

If exam abnormal:

Were any abnormalities found in examining the eyes, ears or mouth?

Yes No

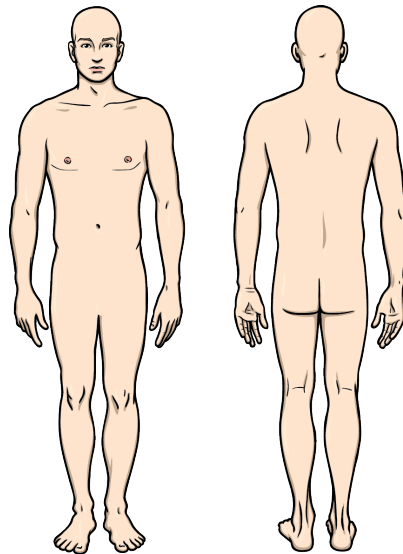
If "yes" specify.....
.....
.....

Was there any muscle weakness? Yes No

If "yes" specify.....
.....
.....

Shade any areas of sensory loss on the diagram

Any other observations?



Dive History

Dive before incident

Date Time In : Time Out : Max Depth

Gas Mixes Used: Air Other (list)

Details of stops/decompression carried out

Comments

Previous Dive

Date Time In : Time Out : Max Depth

Gas Mixes Used: Air Other (list)

Details of stops/decompression carried out

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