

# How to Perform a Sensory Foot Examination?

1 10-g (5.07) Semmes-Weinstein monofilament

Presence or absence of protective sensation

*If not present or result ambiguous*

2 128-Hz tuning fork

Presence or absence of vibratory sensation

*If not present*

3 Ipswich Touch test

Presence or absence of light touch sensation

*Ask the patient whether they feel the pressure, vibration or touch applied ("yes"/"no")*



Hallux



1<sup>st</sup> metatarsal head



5<sup>th</sup> metatarsal head

*Repeat this application twice at the same site but alternate this with at least one "mock" application in which no filament is applied (a total of three questions per site).*

- ✓ Pressure sensation **present at each site**: patient correctly answers on two out of three applications
- ✗ Pressure sensation **absent at each site**: two out of three answers are incorrect

- Apply perpendicular to the skin surface with sufficient force to cause the filament to bend or buckle.
- Hold approximately 2 seconds.
- Time necessary to perform this examination: 2 min for both feet.



Dorsal hallux (distal phalanx)  
(another toe if hallux is absent)

*Repeat this application twice at the same site, alternating with at least one "mock" application in which the tuning fork is not vibrating.*

- ✓ Vibration sensation **present**: patient correctly answers at least two out of three applications
- ✗ Vibration sensation **absent**: two out of three answers are incorrect

- Time necessary to perform this examination: 3-5 min for both feet.



Hallux



3<sup>rd</sup> toe



5<sup>th</sup> toe

- ✓ Light touch sensation **present**: light touch is sensed in  $\geq 2$  sites
- ✗ Light touch sensation **absent**: light touch is not sensed in  $\geq 2$  sites

- When touching, do not push, tap, or poke.
- Hold 1 to 2 seconds.
- Time necessary to perform this examination: 2 min for both feet.