

Cranial Nerve Assessment Quick Guide

CN V Trigeminal (Motor)

"Open Your Mouth." ___ WNL ___ Deviation to left ___ Deviation to right

"Open your mouth and resist against my hand." ___ WNL ___ weakness

"Move your jaw from side to side" (observing movement) ___ WNL ___ Left only ___ Right only

"Move your jaw from side to side against my hand" (provide resistance and observe movement)
___ WNL ___ Left only ___ Right only

"I'm going to touch your face" (Palpate the Masseter and Temporalis) ___ WNL ___ atrophy
___ weakness

"Clench Your Teeth." ___ WNL ___ weak L side ___ weak R side

CN V Trigeminal (Sensory)

"Close your eyes and tell me where I am touching." (check bilateral sensation as you touch areas on their face with a toothette or cotton swab)

Forehead: ___ WNL ___ Decreased right side ___ decreased left side

Cheek: ___ WNL ___ decreased right side ___ decreased left side

Jaw: ___ WNL ___ decreased right side ___ decreased left side

CN VII Facial (Motor)

"Sit and look straight ahead." (Look at their face observing for deviation.) ___ WNL ___ eye droop
___ tremors, contortions, tics ___ lip corner droop ___ drooling ___ asymmetry
___ mask-like face (Mask like means no expression)

"Wrinkle your forehead or look up at ceiling without moving your head."
___ WNL ___ right side deviation ___ left side deviation

"Close your eyes as tightly as possible." ___ WNL ___ right side deviation ___ left side deviation

"Pucker your lips." ___ WNL ___ droop to right ___ droop to left

"Smile, pull back the corners of your lips." ___ WNL ___ deviation to right side ___ deviation to left side

"Show me your teeth while frowning." ___ WNL ___ right side deviation ___ left side deviation

"Say /pu pu pu/" (15-20x in 3 five second trials with a stack of 5-6 tongue depressors taped together) in place. ___ WNL ___ deviation

"Now say /pu pu pu/" (15-20x in 3 five second trials without the tongue depressors.)
___ Same as above ___ better ___ worse

CN VII Facial (Sensory)

"I'm going to have you taste 4 different things. Close your eyes and tell me what you taste: sour, sweet, salty or bitter."
___ WNL ___ absent sweet ___ absent salty ___ absent sour

(Test taste for sweet, sour, salty on anterior 2/3 of tongue. You can use aromatic bitters, lemon juice, sugar and salt. Using a cotton tipped applicator (make sure you have four, one for each flavor) and while the patient has their eyes closed, dip into one of the flavors and swab on the patient's tongue. When using the salt or sugar, first dip the cotton tipped applicator in water and then in the salt or sugar.)

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CN IX Glossopharyngeal

"I'm going to have you taste 4 more things, but I'm going to place them on the back of your tongue. Close your eyes and tell me what you taste: sour, sweet, salty or bitter."

___WNL ___absent sweet ___absent salty ___absent sour
(Repeat all 4 taste tests again on the posterior 1/3 of the tongue)

CN IX and X Glossopharyngeal and Vagus (Motor)

"Open Your Mouth." (Look at the soft palate at rest). ___WNL ___lower on right arch ___ lower on left arch

"Say ah." (Examine soft palate during movement)

___WNL ___ no elevation R ___no elevation L ___deviation of uvula to R ___deviation of uvula to L

"Blow this tissue away from you." (bubbles or cotton) ___WNL ___nasal emission

"Say "ahhh" for as long as possible."

___WNL___ Abnormal Voicing ___hoarse ___breathy___weak___Cough___ no cough reflex

CN XI Spinal Accessory (Motor)

"Maintain a turned head position against my hand as I try to push your head back to midline."

___WNL ___weakness to L ___weakness to R

"Push your head forward against my hand as I try to push your head back." ___WNL ___ unable

"Shrug your shoulders." Look for symmetry and ability of movement. ___WNL ___ unable

CN XII Hypoglossal (Motor)

"Open your mouth" (Examine the patient's tongue as they sit with their mouth slightly open at rest)

___WNL ___atrophy R ___atrophy L ___fasciculations ___median raphe concave R
___median raphe concave L

"Stick out your tongue." (Observe for deviation.)

___ WNL ___deviation R ___deviation L ___unable to protrude past lips

"Open your mouth." (Keep your finger on their mandible with pressure.)

___WNL ___unable to draw tongue base up or back ___unable to retract and depress

"Move your tongue from side to side." (Observe for symmetry of movement.)

___WNL ___inability to move R ___ inability to move L

"Push your tongue back against this tongue depressor."

(Push tongue depressor against the patient's tongue while patient pushes back against the tongue depressor.)

___WNL ___weakness

"Push your tongue back against this tongue depressor." (Manipulate tongue with tongue depressor by pushing

against the tongue as the patient moves their tongue protruding anteriorly or moving tongue laterally).

___WNL ___decreased tone (flaccidity) ___ increased tone (spasticity)