



INFECTIOUS DISEASES (BACTERIAL, FUNGAL, VIRAL, PARASITIC, INFESTATIONS)

NERVE CONDUCTION STUDY - CAN IT DIAGNOSE LEPROSY EARLY?

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Background: Leprosy is a chronic infectious disease which predominantly involves skin and peripheral nerves. Most important consequences of leprosy are due to the involvement of peripheral nerves which leads to gross deformities and disabilities.

Objectives: Role of nerve conduction study(NCS) to detect nerve function impairment(NFI) in leprosy.

Materials and Methods: An electrophysiological study was conducted for 40 newly diagnosed cases of leprosy from December 2017 to August 2018 at department of DVL, Osmania medical college, Hyderabad. Nerve conduction velocities, amplitude, and latencies of ulnar, median, common peroneal, posterior tibial, sural nerves are measured.

Results: It was found that out of 40 cases (PB-6; MB-34), 36 cases have abnormal NCS and only 4 cases have normal NCS. Even pure neuritic and tuberculoid leprosy cases were found to have NFI which were undetected on clinical examination.

Conclusion: Detection of preclinical nerve function impairment can help in the prevention of deformities and disabilities. NCS is a reliable and reproducible test to detect the early NFI. Though it cannot directly diagnose leprosy, it can be used in suspected cases, newly diagnosed cases, and household contacts to detect the NFI early and prevent the complications associated with it.

