

# Compliance Department

## **ELEMENTS OF MUSCULOSKELETAL EXAMINATION**

**11/2010**

# Elements of Musculoskeletal Examination

System/ Body Area	Elements of Examination Musculoskeletal
<u>Constitutional</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Measurement of any three of the following seven vital signs: 1) sitting or standing blood pressure, 2) supine blood pressure, 3) pulse rate and regularity, 4) respiration, 5) temperature, 6) height, 7) weight (May be measured and recorded by ancillary staff)</b></li> <li>• <b>General appearance of patient (e.g., development, nutrition, body habitus, deformities, attention to grooming)</b></li> </ul>
Cardiovascular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examination of peripheral vascular system by observation (e.g., swelling, varicosities) and palpation (e.g., pulses, temperature, edema, tenderness)</li> </ul>
Lymphatic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Palpation of lymph nodes in neck, axillae, groin and/or other location</li> </ul>

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<u>Musculoskeletal</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examination of gait and station</li> <li>• Examination of joints(s), bone(s) and muscle(s)/ tendon(s) of four of the following six areas: 1) head and neck; 2) spine, ribs and pelvis; 3) right upper extremity; 4) left upper extremity; 5) right lower extremity; and 6) left lower extremity. The examination of a given are includes:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspection, percussion and/or palpation with notation of any misalignment, asymmetry, crepitation, defects, tenderness, masses or effusions</li> <li>• Assessment of range of motion with notation of any pain (e.g., straight leg raising), crepitation or contracture</li> <li>• Assessment of stability with notation of any dislocation (luxation), subluxation or laxity</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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<u>Musculoskeletal (Continued)</u>	<p>•Assessment of muscle strength and tone (e.g., flaccid, cog wheel, spastic) with notation of any atrophy or abnormal movements</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> For the comprehensive level of examination, all four of the elements identified by bullet must be performed and documented for each of four anatomic areas. For the three lower levels of examination, each element is counted separately for each body area. For example, assessing range of motion in two extremities constitutes two elements.</p>
Extremities	[See musculoskeletal and skin]
<u>Skin</u>	<p>•Inspection and/or palpation of skin and subcutaneous tissue (e.g., scars, rashes, lesions, café-au-lait spots, ulcers) in four of the following six areas:</p>

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<p><b><u>Skin</u></b> <b><u>(Continued)</u></b></p>	<p>1) Head and neck; 2) trunk; 3) right upper extremity; 4) left upper extremity; 5) right lower extremity; and 6) left lower extremity.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> For the comprehensive level, the examination of all four anatomic areas must be performed and documented. For the three lower levels of examination, each element body area is counted separately. For example, inspection and/or palpation of the skin and subcutaneous tissue of two extremities constitutes two elements.</p>
<p><b><u>Neurological/</u></b> <b><u>Psychiatric</u></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Test coordination (e.g., finger/nose, heel/knee/shin, rapid alternating movements in the upper and lower extremities, evaluation of fine motor coordination in young children)</li> </ul>

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<b><u>Neurological/ Psychiatric (Cont'd)</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Examination of deep tendon reflexes and/or nerve stretch test with notation of pathological reflexes (e.g., Babinski)</b></li><li>• <b>Examination of sensation (e.g., by touch, pin, vibration, proprioception)</b></li></ul> <p><b>Brief assessment of mental status including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Orientation to time, place and person</b></li><li>• <b>Mood and affect (e.g., depression, anxiety, agitation)</b></li></ul>

# Elements of Musculoskeletal Examination

## Content and Documentation Requirements

### Level of Exam

### Perform and Document:

Problem Focused

**One to five** elements identified by a bullet.

Expanded Problem Focused

**At least six** elements identified by a bullet.

Detail

**At least twelve** elements identified by a bullet.

Comprehensive

Perform **all** elements identified by a bullet; document every element in an **Underlined/bold** box and at least one element a non-underlined/bold box.

# Resources

- UCLA Compliance Office
  - Marti Arvin, Chief Compliance Officer (310) 794-6763
- Confidential Hotline 1-800 296-7188
- UCLA Compliance Website <http://www.mednet.ucla.edu/compliance/>.