

Adult Nursing II

Clinical Manifestations and Diagnosis of Neurological Disorder

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Clinical Manifestations related to a Neurological Disorder

- Loss of consciousness, coma, lethargy, drowsiness
- Disorientation, confusion, depression
- Convulsions, excitability, tremor, restless
- Headache (frontal or occipital)
- Vomiting (projectile, without nausea)
- ↓ co-ordination, balance, proprioception, ataxic gait

Clinical Manifestations related to a Neurological Disorder (cont)

- Visual: diplopia, blurred vision, ↓ visual field, photophobia, unequal pupils, ↓ reactivity to light
- Altered motor function: paralysis (spastic or flaccid), paresis, aphasia, dysphagia
- Reduced fine motor control
- Altered sensory function: paraesthesia, numbness, ↓ sensory organ function (taste, smell, sight, hearing)

Other Signs of Neurological Disorder on Clinical Assessment

- Hyperpyrexia (loss of hypothalamic temperature control)
- Bradycardia
- ↑ pulse pressure (↑ systolic; ↓ diastolic)
- Slow respirations (depressed resp centre)
- Signs of neurogenic bladder (retention/ incontinence)
- Decorticate/ decerebrate posturing (in unconscious patient)

Neurological Disorder: Physical Examination

- History and physical examination including tendon reflexes/ Babinski response
- Conscious level/ orientation
- Glasgow Coma Scale
- Cranial nerve assessment including sight, hearing, smell, taste
- Sensory and motor function
- Vital signs, bladder control

Neurological Disorder: Diagnostic Tests*

- CT scan with or without contrast medium
- MRI
- Echo encephalogram
- Cerebral angiography
- Carotid doppler
- Brain scan (radioactive substance IV)
- Electro-encephalogram
- Lumbar puncture/ myelogram

Neurological Disorder: Diagnostic Blood Tests

- Blood glucose/ ketones
- Serum ammonia
- Serum urea/ electrolytes
- Osmolality
- ABG
- Serum calcium
- Drug/ alcohol levels if suspected overdose
- Coagulation studies/ prothrombin time