

Neuropathy: Causes and Workup Sheet

The 5 causes to work through in order, why the burning peaks at night, and the exact words and tests to bring to the appointment.

✓ **Verified against published guidance** from Mayo Clinic, NIDDK & Johns Hopkins Medicine · sources below

New tingling, weakness or pain in the hands or feet deserves a prompt appointment. A cut or sore on a numb foot that is infected or will not heal is a same-week call.

✓ Do This

Start With Blood Sugar

- Diabetes is a most common cause in the US
- It is a fast, cheap test
- Up to half of people with diabetes have it

COACH'S TIP Start where the odds are, not where the guessing is.

Bring the Exact Symptom Words

- Burning, tingling, numb, painful, weak
- Say when it happens
- Say if a bedsheet hurts

COACH'S TIP Those five words steer the whole exam.

Expect a Hands-On Exam

- Strength, tone and reflexes
- Filament and nerve conduction testing
- Touch, pain, temperature, vibration

COACH'S TIP A real neuropathy exam is more than a chat.

Check Your Feet Every Day

- Look at the soles and between the toes
- Catch it before it becomes an ulcer
- Blisters and cuts you cannot feel

COACH'S TIP If you cannot feel it, you have to look for it.

Ask About Kidneys and Thyroid

- Both are on the Hopkins cause list
- Both are treatable when found
- Both show up on standard bloodwork

COACH'S TIP Two more answers hiding in a routine panel.

Manage the Numbers You Can

- Blood glucose toward your goal
- This is what slows progression
- Blood pressure and cholesterol too

COACH'S TIP Stopping the damage is the realistic win.

✗ Do Not

Do Not Call It Poor Circulation

- Neuropathy is nerve damage
- The workup is different too
- Circulation is a different system

COACH'S TIP Wrong system means wrong plan.

Do Not Treat Numbness as the Mild Version

- Ulcers and infections start unfelt
- Bone and joint damage follows
- Foot shape can change

COACH'S TIP Numb is the dangerous one, not the easy one.

Do Not Assume Nothing Can Be Done

- Managing the numbers slows it
- Early diagnosis protects what is left
- Causes like thyroid are treatable

COACH'S TIP A shrug is not a treatment plan.

Do Not Wait for It to Pass

- Mayo says seek care right away
- Months of waiting cost nerves
- Early treatment prevents further damage

COACH'S TIP Waiting is the only truly irreversible move.

Do Not Self Diagnose the Type

- More than 100 types exist
- The type sets the treatment
- Motor, sensory and autonomic differ

COACH'S TIP Naming your type is what makes a plan specific.

Do Not Walk Barefoot If Sensation Is Low

- You will not feel a splinter or a burn
- Shoes are cheap insurance
- Small injuries become big ones

COACH'S TIP Protect what you cannot feel.

THE NUMBERS BEHIND THIS SHEET

Three figures worth knowing

Up to 1 in 2 people with diabetes who have peripheral neuropathy

More than 100 recognized types of peripheral neuropathy

Feet first where the damage typically shows up earliest