Laryngeal EMG (electromyogram)

Your doctor has ordered a Laryngeal EMG (electromyogram) for you. An EMG is the electrical study of your nerves and muscles. This study helps your doctor to find the cause of your symptoms and decide on the best treatment for you. You do not have to do anything special to prepare for the test. If you have question about the EMG, be sure to ask your doctor or nurse.

If you are taking a blood thinning medicine please call us at (608) 263-7247.

Arriving for your EMG
Your EMG appointment is in the EMG lab, J module/2nd floor. You must stop and register 15 minutes before your scheduled appointment. Registration is on the main floor inside the clinic entrance on your right hand side. After registration, continue on 'Main Street' through the H elevator lobby to the J lobby. Please check in at the Neurodiagnostics desk for your EMG.

What is a Laryngeal EMG?
You will be asked to lie on a bed with your head back and slightly over the edge of a pillow.
- First, a small metal disc (about the size of a fifty-cent piece) will be taped to your skin.
- After cleaning the skin over your voice box with alcohol, a thin electrode will be inserted through the skin into the muscle that controls voice production.

- The electrode looks like a needle, but it is solid and not hollow.
- Most often, four muscles will be tested, two on the left and two on the right side of your voice box.
- During the exam, you will be asked to make a sound like soft eees.
- You will hear a crackling speaker sound that comes from our EMG equipment. This is the electrical activity from your muscles which has been changed into sound waves.
- There are no electrical shocks during any of this exam.
- The study is somewhat uncomfortable because of the needle sticks.
- Care is taken to lessen any discomfort. But, we cannot use anesthetic medicines to reduce the discomfort. They would interfere with the EMG signal we get from your muscles.

What this study tell my doctor
The signals tell us if you have a disease of the nerves or the muscles that control your voice box. Also, it tells us if the message that the brain sends to your voice box is normal.

The entire EMG takes about 15 minutes. After the test, we will send the results to your doctor.