

Examples of Normal/Abnormal Physical Findings

NEUROLOGICAL/SENSORY (LOC, sensation, strength, speech, pupil assessment, pain):

Normal: Alert, oriented X 3. Pupils 3 mm equal, round reactive to light (PERRL). Moves all extremities on command, responds appropriately to sharp and dull sensations. Hand grasp toe wiggle (HGTW) equal & strong bilaterally. Movements purposeful & coordinated. Speaks English (native language) clearly. Pain level 0 on 1-10 pain scale.

Abnormal: Confused to place & time, oriented to person. R pupil 3 mm, L pupil 6 mm. Pupils react sluggishly to light. Abnormal cardinal gaze – nystagmus. Does not respond to sharp/dull sensations. Right hand grasp weak, left strong, toe wiggle absent bilaterally. Speech slurred, incoherent. Complains of pain of 8 on 1-10 pain scale.

PSYCHOLOGICAL/SOCIAL (affect, interaction with family, friends, staff):

Normal: Cheerful affect, interacts appropriately with family, friends and staff

Abnormal: Flat affect, little interaction with family, friends or staff. Agitated, uncooperative, withdrawn.

EENT (symmetry, drainage of eyes, ears, nose, throat, mouth, including dentition, nodes and swallowing):

Normal: Sclera clear & white without drainage. Ears symmetrical, auditory canals without drainage. Hears spoken voice without difficulty. Nasal septum midline, mucosa pink, oral mucous membranes pink, moist & intact. Neck supple with n palpable lymph nodes.

Abnormal: Sclera yellow, conjunctival membrane red with yellow purulent drainage. Unable to hear without hearing aid. Auditory canals with purulent drainage. Nasal septum deviated to the left. Oral mucosa dry & cracked, gums red & swollen, numerous missing teeth. Neck stiff. Multiple enlarged cervical lymph nodes 3 cm in diameter present, tender to palpation.

RESPIRATORY (chest configuration, breath sounds, rate, rhythm, depth, pattern):

Normal: Chest symmetrical, trachea midline. Respirations 22, even and unlabored. Breath sounds clear to auscultation (CTA) bilaterally. Breathing room air. O2 sat on room air (RA) 98%.

Abnormal: Chest barrel shaped, trachea shifted to right. Respirations 34 and shallow. Breath sounds diminished on the left with expiratory wheezes heard throughout. Coarse crackles bilaterally, respirations labored. O2 at 3 L per nasal cannula (N/C) with O2 sat 86-88%.

CARDIOVASCULAR (heart sounds, apical and radial rate, rhythm, radial and pedal pulses, pattern)

Normal: S1 & S2 audible with regular rate & rhythm. Apical rate 72, radial pulses 2+ bilaterally with rate of 72. Pedal pulses 2+ bilaterally, no edema noted. B/P 110/76. Denies chest pain or discomfort. Nailbeds pink, capillary refill < 2-3 seconds.

Abnormal: Heart sounds audible with murmur noted. Irregular rate & rhythm. Apical pulse 132, radial pulses 1+ bilaterally with rate of 102. Right pedal pulse 2+, left pedal pulse 0, audible with Doppler only. 3+ pitting edema bilaterally to ankles & feet. Nailbeds pale & gray. Capillary refill > 3 seconds.

GASTROINTESTINAL (bowel habits, appearance of abdomen, bowel sounds, tenderness to palpation):

Normal: Abdomen, flat, soft & nontender. Active bowel sounds X 4 quadrants. States usually has BM every AM with soft, formed brown stool (not observed).

Abnormal: Abdomen, distended & firm. Bowel sounds absent X 4 quadrants. Complaints of severe tenderness to right lower quadrant (RLQ) during palpation. Incontinent of frequent, black tarry diarrhea stool.

GENITOURINARY/REPRODUCTIVE (frequency, urgency, continence, color, clarity, odor, vaginal bleeding, discharge)

Normal: Voids clear, yellow urine, adequate amount. Denies odor, discharge or pain.
Post-menopausal.

Abnormal: Indwelling urinary catheter to gravity drainage, draining cloudy, amber-colored urine with foul smell and sediment. Urine output 100 mL in past 8 hours.

SKIN/MUSCULOSKELETAL (skin color, temperature, texture, turgor & integrity; mobility, gait)

Normal: Skin warm, dry & intact. Color appropriate to race. Turgor elastic. Walks independently without assistance, gait steady.

Abnormal: Skin cool, clammy. Turgor poor. Bilateral lower extremities (BLE) contracted, lying in fetal position. Does not ambulate. Stage III decubital ulcer on coccyx – 10 cm X 6 cm covered with transparent dressing.

WOUNDS/DRESSINGS (describe)

10 cm midline abdominal incision, sutures intact, reddened with small amount of serous drainage.

Occlusive dressing to right knee – clean, dry & intact.

OTHER