

Mark Hinkes, DPM, DABPS, FACFAS, DAPWCA

Chief, Podiatry Section
Chair, Preservation Amputation Care and Treatment (PACT) Program
VA Tennessee Valley Healthcare System
Nashville, TN. 37212

Performing a Valid Monofilament Wire Screening of the Diabetic Foot

Purpose:

To identify issues concerning both the Tester and the Testee in performance of a valid monofilament wire screening for evaluation of amputation risk of the diabetic foot.

Goals;

The Testee should understand the nature of the test and how to respond during the exam.

The Tester should have the knowledge and skills that insures the performance of a valid test and appropriately document those results.

Objectives:

To identify and classify patients with loss of protective sensation (LOPS).

Discussion:

The Tester must have the training to perform the three tests necessary to properly identify the amputation risk factors according the (IWGDF). They are

1. Palpation of Pulses
2. Identification of osseous and soft tissue deformities.
3. Monofilament wire testing

Of all these tests, none is more pivotal than the monofilament wire test. The information gained from this painless non-invasive, test, is vital to classifying each patient's individual risk factors for amputation. With this information individualized preventive care needs can be provided according to the criteria of the International Working Group on the Diabetic Foot. (IWGDF)

Know the Test:

For the monofilament wire test to be valid, both the Tester and Testee must perform their roles without error. Both must understand the issues affecting each of them concerning administration of the test, data collection and data management.

Patient Education.

Explain the results of the test and briefly discuss opportunities for prevention.

