

# Sensory Examination

## General Inspection

- Asymmetry
- Abnormal Posture
- Orientation to person, place and time
- Ask patient if they have any pain
- Gross Abnormal movements

## Upper Limb

- **Light Touch** (*Dorsal Column Medial Lemniscus*)
  - Touch skin with cotton wool, while patient's eyes are closed, comparing each side
- **Pain** (*Spinothalamic*)
  - Sharp vs Dull in each dermatome, varying order, compare each side
- **Vibration** (*Dorsal Column Medial Lemniscus*)
  - Use a 128Hz tuning fork, placed on a DIP joint, ask patient to close eyes, should be able to feel vibration, and ceasing of vibration.
  - Compare sides, if weak or poor, move up to ulnar processes, then elbow olecranon
- **Proprioception** (*Dorsal Column Medial Lemniscus*)
  - DIP joint of thumb, flex up and down randomly with eyes closed, ask patient to describe movement. Hold the finger from the side, so that pressure doesn't assist.
  - Progress to wrist and elbow if abnormal

## Lower Limb

- **Light Touch** (*Dorsal Column Medial Lemniscus*) Same process as upper limb
- **Pain** (*Spinothalamic tract*) Same process as upper limb
- **Vibration** (*Dorsal Column Medial Lemniscus*)
  - Use a 128Hz tuning fork, placed on a DIP joint
  - Ask patient to close eyes, should be able to feel vibration, and ceasing of vibration
  - Compare sides, if weak or poor, move up to a malleolus, then knee epicondyle
- **Proprioception** (*Dorsal Column Medial Lemniscus*)
  - DIP joint of big toe, flex up and down randomly with eyes closed, ask patient to describe movement. Hold the toe from the side, so that pressure doesn't assist.
  - Progress to ankle and knee if abnormal

Temperature Testing (*Spinothalamic*) may be done if required (for all limbs) e.g. syringomyelia

Key Limb Dermatomes			
	Area		Area
C5	Shoulder tip, outer upper arm	L3	Area around front of knee
C6	Lateral aspect of forearm, thumb	L4	Medial aspect of leg
C7	Middle finger	L5	Lateral aspect of leg, medial side of dorsum of foot
C8	Little finger	S1	Heel and most of sole
T1	Medial aspect of upper arm, elbow	S2	Posterior aspect of thigh
L2	Upper anterior thigh	S3,S4,S5	Concentric rings around anus