

The Three Cent Neurological Examⁱ

Use three shiny pennies

Patent Name _____

Date _____

Test	What should happen	What this tests	Check if child can perform and comments
Drop the pennies on floor behind child	Child should turn toward the sound.	Rough test of hearing.	
Ask child to pick up pennies and give to a parent without using any hand gestures	Child should follow instructions.	Hearing, understanding. Ability to follow commands. Picking up coin assesses balance, coordination. Notice if child uses pincer grasp.	
For an older child (greater than two use serial commands): Please give one penny to your mom and put the other on the table	Child should follow instructions.	Assesses child's ability to follow serial commands.	

Test	What should happen	What this tests	Check if child can perform and comments
Coin on nose	With a few words of mumbo jumbo or abracadabra, place the coin on the child's upturned nose and ask her to walk across the room or down the hall. This is for a child older than 3.	Tests for pseudoataxia or pseudo-hemiparetic gait.	
Coin on hand	Put coin on dorsal surface of each outstretched hand and walk. Watch for downward drift or asymmetry for a child greater than 3 years old.	Tests for pseudoataxia or pseudo-hemiparetic gait.	
End of exam give the child one of the pennies			

OTHER NEUROLOGICAL TESTS

Test	How to Perform and Outcomes	Object	Mark if child can perform and comments
Vanishing Tissue paper	Roll a piece of tissue paper into a ball and throw it on the ground, then ask the child to pick it up and give it to a parent. Repeat the test with progressively smaller balls of paper until you can barely see them. Preferably do this against a white background. If the child can see as well as you, she does not have a substantial vision problem.	Vision test in preliterate child can test vision in both eyes by covering one eye at a time	
Blow Basketball	Place a dime on the table. Tell the child whoever wins gets the dime. Hold up a tissue, the physician and patient blow the tissue back and forth 50 times.	Absence spells what used to be called <i>petite mal</i> . Child with absence spells will stop after 15 to 40 breaths	

¹ Freeman, John. "The three-cent neurological exam and other tools for an era of managed care" *Contemp Pediatrics* 1997; 14:153