



DEEP TENDON REFLEXES (SCALE & GRADING)



Purpose

Test involuntary muscle contractions in response to a stimulus. DTRs are performed during neuro exams and other assessments.

Equipment

Reflex hammer



Grading

0 No reflex

1 Hypo-active

2 Normal

3 Hyper-active

4 Hyper-active w/ clonus

5 Hyperactive w/ sustained clonus

Reflex	Main spinal nerve roots involved	Description	
Biceps	C5, C6	Client's arm is flexed slightly, palm facing up. Hold arm with thumb in the antecubital space over the biceps tendon. Strike thumb with the hammer. The arm should flex slightly.	
Brachioradialis	C6	Client's arm is flexed slightly, resting on the lap with the palm facing down. Strike hammer over the outer forearm about 5 cm above the wrist. The palm should turn upward as the forearm rotates laterally.	
Triceps	C7	Client's arm is flexed 90°. Support the arm and strike just above the elbow, between the epicondyles. The arm should extend at the elbow.	
Patellar	L4	Client's leg is dangling (if possible). Place your hand on one thigh and strike the leg just below the kneecap. The leg should extend at the knee.	