Phalen’s Test

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Phalen's Test, also known as Phalen's Maneuver or Phalen's Sign, is a clinical test used to evaluate for carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS), which is a common condition characterized by compression of the median nerve as it passes through the carpal tunnel in the wrist.

Instructions

1. Ask the patient to sit comfortably on a chair with their elbows resting on a table and their forearms in a neutral position, with their palms facing down.
2. Make sure the patient is relaxed and not holding any tension in their arms.
3. Explain to the patient that you will ask them to flex their wrists and maintain this position for about 60 seconds. Tell them to let you know if they experience any unusual sensations or discomfort during the test.
4. Ask the patient to flex their wrists fully so that their fingers are pointing towards their forearms.
5. Then, tell them to rest their hands on the table with their fingers pointing towards their body so that the palms of their hands are facing down.
6. Keep an eye on the patient for the full 60 seconds.
7. Look for any signs of discomfort or unusual sensations, such as tingling, numbness, or pain, in the patient's fingers or hands.
8. After the 60 seconds are up, ask the patient if they experienced any unusual sensations or discomfort during the test. If the patient reports any unusual sensations or discomfort, ask them to describe the location and nature of the sensation.
9. If the patient reports any unusual sensations or discomfort during the test, it may indicate a positive Phalen's Test.
10. Make sure to document the results of Phalen's test in the patient's medical record

Reminders

- Remember that Phalen's Test is just one piece of the puzzle in diagnosing CTS; a positive test does not definitively confirm the diagnosis.
- Consider the patient's clinical history, symptoms, and results of other diagnostic tests in conjunction with Phalen's Test.
- Prioritize patient safety throughout the test by ensuring proper positioning, communication, and monitoring for any adverse reactions or discomfort.
- If the Phalen's Test is positive or there is a high clinical suspicion for carpal tunnel syndrome, consider further evaluation and referral to a specialist for confirmation and management.

Notes

Mr Thompson felt some tingling or numbness in their thumb, index and middle fingers, and maybe even half of their ring finger when he bent their wrists for about a minute. For further evaluation.