Understanding Pain and Conducting a Pain Assessment: Diagnosing Neuropathic Pain

Start

Does patient exhibit pain?

Gather patient history

Does patient exhibit a history of relevant neurological lesion or disease, and pain distribution is neuroanatomically plausible?

Possible neuropathic pain

Conduct examination

Is pain associated with sensory signs in the same neuroanatomically plausible region?

Diagnostic test(s) that may be used:
- Laser-evoked potentials
- Nerve conduction studies
- Somatosensory-evoked potentials
- Skin or nerve biopsy

Unlikely to be neuropathic pain

No

Unlikely to be neuropathic pain

Yes

Probable neuropathic pain

Conduct diagnostic test

Confirm lesion or disease of the somatosensory nervous system explaining the pain

Diagnostic test that may be used:
- Quantitative sensory tests

Possible neuropathic pain

No