

Cold Stimulation

A cold stimulation test checks how well the blood flows through the arteries to the fingers. This is done by checking the temperature in the fingers after they are exposed to ice water. The test, done in the Vascular Lab, takes about 60 to 90 minutes.

*You will receive
test results at
the end of
the exam.*

Before the test

There is no special preparation for this test.

On the day of the exam, plan to arrive 15 minutes before your test time. Be sure to bring:

- Your physician's written order for the test, if one was given to you
- A list of allergies
- A list of all your current medications (prescription, over-the-counter and herbals)
- Photo ID
- Medical insurance information and card
- Medicare card (Medicare patients only)

For their own safety, children under the age of 16 may not visit in the testing area. They may stay in the waiting room with a responsible adult.

Please come to the Galter Pavilion, 201 East Huron Street, and check in at the reception desk on the 8th floor. Parking is available for patients and visitors in the garage at 222 East Huron Street, across from the Feinberg and Galter pavilions. For discounted rates, please bring your parking ticket with you. Tickets can be validated at the Customer Services Desks on the 1st and 2nd floor of the Feinberg and Galter pavilions, and on the 1st floor of Prentice (including the Prentice 24-hour desk near the Superior Street entrance).

During the test

The technologist (tech) will help you sit on the edge of a bed. Small thermometers will be put on each of your fingertips. Pre-test temperatures will be recorded. Both hands will be put in ice water for 20 seconds and then onto a dry towel. The tech will record the temperature of your fingers. This will be done about every 5 minutes for up to 20 minutes.

Most patients report little or no discomfort during the test.

After the test

The tech will provide towels to dry your hands.

Most often, the vascular surgeon who reads the test sends written results to your physician in about 5 business days.

If you have questions about this test, please call the Vascular Lab at 312.926.5809.

Northwestern Medicine – Health Information Resources

For more information, contact Northwestern Memorial Hospital’s Alberto Culver Health Learning Center (HLC) at hlc@nm.org, or by calling 312.926.5465. Health information professionals can help you find the information you need and provide you with personal support at no charge.

For more information about Northwestern Medicine, please visit our website at nm.org.

Para asistencia en español, por favor llamar al Departamento de Representantes para Pacientes al 312.926.3112.

The entities that come together as Northwestern Medicine are committed to representing the communities we serve, fostering a culture of inclusion, delivering culturally competent care, providing access to treatment and programs in a nondiscriminatory manner and eliminating healthcare disparities. For questions, please call either Northwestern Memorial Hospital’s Patient Representatives Department at 312.926.3112, TDD/TTY 312.926.6363 or the Northwestern Medical Group Patient Representatives Department at 312.695.1100, TDD/TTY 312.926.6363.

Developed by: NMH Vascular Laboratory