

Upper Limb Tension Tests

Patient's name:	
Examiner's name:	Date:
Medical history/symptoms (if needed):	
General test notes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Before you do the assessment, you must explain to the patient what you're going to do in a way that they'll understand that won't make them tense unnecessarily in anticipation of the symptoms or pain.• Let your patient know that they must verbally tell you if they're feeling the symptoms, pain, or discomfort at any step of the test.• You must do the test on the unaffected side first to serve as a point of reference.• If the patient expresses pain or symptoms are reproduced even if it's at the beginning of the test, the test will cease and they will be given a positive result for that test.	
General test result	
(+) Positive test if:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Patient expresses pain• Symptoms are reproduced• Bending the head towards the unaffected side worsens pain or symptoms and bending towards the affected side alleviates pain or symptoms.	
Elvey's Upper Limb Tension Test 1 (ULTT A/Magee's ULTT 1/ Median Nerve Bias)	
Instructions	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Have your patient lie down into a supine position.2. Depress the patient's shoulder or push your patient's shoulder down.3. Abduct the patient's shoulder to 110 degrees. Ensure that the elbow is at 90 degrees.4. Rotate your patient's shoulder laterally and supinate the forearm.5. Extend their fingers and wrist.6. Extend the elbow.7. Finally, ask them to bend their head opposite to the affected side and vice versa.	
<i>Note: They will receive a positive test if they feel a pain or burning/tingling sensation in the upper limb or first two to three fingers.</i>	
Patient's test results	
Negative	Positive

Notes:

Elvey's Upper Limb Tension Test 2A (ULTT B/Magee's ULTT 2/ Median Nerve Bias)

Instructions

1. Have your patient lie down or be in a supine position.
2. Depress the patient's shoulder or push your patient's shoulder down.
3. Abduct the patient's arm to 10 degrees.
4. Flex their elbow to 90 degrees then supinate the forearm.
5. Extend their fingers and wrist.
6. Extend the elbow.
7. Finally, ask them to bend their head opposite to the affected side and vice versa.

Patient's test results

Negative

Positive

Notes:

Upper Limb Tension Test 2B (ULTT C/Magee's ULTT 3/Radial Nerve Bias)

Instructions

1. Have your patient lie down to a supine position.
2. Depress the patient's shoulder or push your patient's shoulder down.
3. Abduct the patient's arm to 20 degrees.
4. Internally rotate the shoulder then pronate the forearm.
5. Flex the fingers and wrist.
6. Extend the elbow.
7. Finally, ask them to bend their head opposite to the affected side and vice versa.

Note: They will get a positive test here if they feel pain or a burning/tingling sensation in the posterior of the forearm and hand.

Patient's test results

Negative

Positive

Notes:

Elvey's Upper Limb Tension Test 3 (ULTT D/Magee's ULTT 4/Ulnar Nerve Bias)

Instructions

1. Have your patient lie down to a supine position.
2. Depress the patient's shoulder or push your patient's shoulder down.
3. Abduct the patient's arm to 110 degrees.
4. Pronate the forearm.
5. Extend the fingers and wrist.
6. Bend the elbow toward the patient.
7. Finally, ask them to bend their head opposite to the affected side and vice versa.

Note: They will get a positive test here if they feel pain or a burning/tingling sensation in the 4th and 5th digits.

Patient's test results

Negative

Positive

Notes:

Additional notes

References

Adrianna Simmons. (2022, April 15). *Upper Limb Tension Test 1* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cy6kqjLLDII>

Adrianna Simmons. (2022, April 15). *Upper Limb Tension Test 2A* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kcTN1Tmp-Zg>

Adrianna Simmons. (2022, April 15). *Upper Limb Tension Test 2B* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b5VkzZ06vW4>

Adrianna Simmons. (2022, April 15). *Upper Limb Tension Test 3* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dogBcKQ1y88>

Elvey, R. L. (1986). Treatment of arm pain associated with abnormal brachial plexus tension. *Australian Journal of Physiotherapy*, 32(4), 225–230. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0004-9514\(14\)60655-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0004-9514(14)60655-3)

Magee, D. J. (2020). *Orthopedic physical assessment (7th edition)*. Elsevier.
Verhagen, A. P., Brown, H., Hancock, M., & Anderson, D. (2023). Test procedures and positive diagnostic criteria of the upper limb tension tests differ: A systematic review of the DiTA database. *Brazilian Journal of Physical Therapy*, 27(6), 100558. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bjpt.2023.100558>