Sensory testing with graded monofilaments is a simple, reliable, reproducible skill which is not excessively time-consuming. Graded monofilaments of different gauges are commercially available, delivering a known fixed amount of pressure. Baseline and serial testing can be done easily and compared.

**Keywords:** Graded monofilaments, sensory testing

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**Introduction**

In the clinical management of leprosy patients, it is important to assess accurately the diagnosis, disability grading, disease progress, severity of reactions (both Type I and II), and also to monitor for any neurological complications arising from the use of thalidomide. Sensory testing with graded monofilaments is a simple, reliable, reproducible skill which is not excessively time-consuming and can be mastered easily.

**Method**

Graded monofilaments of different gauges are commercially available (Figure 1). One end of the filament is applied to the skin at right angle till it begins to bend (Figure 2). The amount of pressure exerted depends on its diameter and is known for each monofilament (Table 1) as supplied by the manufacturer. The finest (smallest caliber) one of the monofilaments is used initially. The patient is asked to close his eyes, and indicate if he can sense the touch of the filament. If he cannot feel the filament, then a filament of the next wider gauge is used until he can feel it. A number of spots on the palms and soles corresponding to innervations by different nerves are tested (Figure 3), and the results can be charted. Baseline and serial testing results can be done easily and compared.