

Neurology Clerkship Survival Guide: Des Moines

The Test

The exam is an **in-house exam**. Materials presented on this exam will come almost exclusively from the lecture materials provided to you via the handouts. It is very possible to do well on this exam if you just study the materials provided as it is probably the fairest clerkship exam with the most straight-forward questions.

Best Resources

- The lecture handouts found on ICON (Wendi will give these to you in a binder) are required material for your exam preparation. You also have the option of watching recorded lectures as well, but the lecturers will often read directly off the slides. So how you use these resources depends on your learning style. It is not really necessary to study both however.
- The student-made study guide that is included in the binder is very helpful to quickly plow through topics. Still go through as many of the handout materials as you can, but in a pinch, the study guide should get you a pass. I recommend annotating the study guide as you go through the lecture handouts.
- Dr. Gutu has provided a PowerPoint for pediatric neurology topics that you will receive. Students have found this an extremely useful resource during the clerkship.

Other Resources

- Other students have indicated that First Aid for USMLE Step 1 is especially useful for this clerkship. This clerkship is a good one (along with Psychiatry) to study both for Step 1 and the clerkship exam, as many final exam questions are covered in First Aid. Also, First Aid is helpful if you want to do well in Neuro Jeopardy. Keep in mind though that Neuro Jeopardy is not always a super high yield endeavor for the exam. That said taking notes during it could get you a couple questions on the exam.
- There is also a floating word document of the Neuro Jeopardy questions and answers. Recommend trying Neuro Jeopardy without looking at that, so you can determine your actual knowledge base, but would skim through it before the test if you have access. Connect with students from the classes above you if you need a copy.

Schedule

- **Outpatient Pediatric Neurology (1 week):** Most days start around 9AM, or 8AM with Dr. Croxton, and you can usually expect to get out before 5PM. You will spend the week with one attending physician. This service is where students managed to interview the most patients and got the most comfortable performing the neurologic exam.
- **Outpatient Adult Neurology (1 week):** Days are usually 8AM-5PM, and you likely won't spend more than 2 days with a single physician. There will be some shadowing on this service, but you also may have the opportunity to participate in some procedures (Botox injections or nerve

blocks for example). Take this time to nail down criteria for common movement disorders, types of headaches, first line treatments, etc.

- **Inpatient Neurology (2 weeks):** Days are usually 8AM-5PM. You will spend most of your time at Methodist. You may see a consult at Lutheran, especially if working with Dr. Panuganti. One weekend is required for this service. Most of your time will be spent seeing consults with your attending physician and the nurse Amy (who is wonderful, the glue that holds the team together, since the attending physician you are with may change in the middle of your time on inpatient).

Pearls

- Understand if you want to shadow or learn. Expectation may be to read extensively.
- Understand how attending physicians might want patients presented to them.
- Make sure you get the pediatric neurology presentation when on that rotation.
- Have a concrete idea of your diagnosis and plan in place before you present a patient.
- Give thought to answering the question, “He/She is your patient, what do you want to do?”