

Head-to-Toe Examination: The Adult Checklist

X=Required **O**=Optional

COMPONENT		P	F
GENERAL INSPECTION	X		
Patient instructions • Empty bladder • Removal of clothing, put on gown	X		
Measurements • Vital signs • Height, weight • Distant vision-Snellen Chart	X X O		
HEAD and FACE Inspect • Skin • Symmetry and external characteristics of ears and eyes • Skull • May be done with neuro exam • Ability to clench teeth • squeeze eyes tightly shut • wrinkle forehead • smile • stick out tongue • puff out cheeks Palpate • Scalp and hair • Facial bones • Temporomandibular joint • Sinus regions Test light sensation: • Forehead • Cheeks • Chin	X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X		
EYES • External examination-eyelids, eyelashes • Inspect -sclerae conjunctivae, • Palpate lacrimal apparatus • Near-Vision Screening • Function • Pupillary response	X X X O		

Cover-uncover test	X		
Inspect red reflex with ophthalmoscope	O		
Assess visual fields	X		
Extraocular eye movements	X		
EARS			
• Inspect-alignment and placement	X		
• Palpate auricle	X		
• Assess hearing with whisper test	X		
• Use a tuning fork to assess bone and air conduction	X		
NOSE			
Inspect ear canal and TM with otoscope			
• Nose structure	X		
• Position of septum	X		
• Determine patency of each nostril	X		
• Inspect mucosa, septum, turbinates	X		
Mouth and Pharynx			
• Inspect-lips, buccal mucosa, gums, hard and soft palates, floor of mouth	X		
• Inspect oropharynx: note anteroposterior pillars, uvula, tonsils, posterior pharynx, mouth odor	X		
• Inspect teeth for color, number, surface characteristics	X		
• Inspect tongue for color, characteristics, symmetry, movement	X		
• Test gag reflex and "ah" reflex	X		
NECK			
Inspect			
• Symmetry/smoothness of neck/thyroid	X		
• Jugular venous distention	X		
• Perform active and passive ROM: test resistance against examiner's hand	X		
• Shoulder shrug	X		
Palpate	X		
• Carotid pulses-each side separately	X		
• Tracheal position	X		
• Thyroid	X		
• Lymph nodes-	X		
pre and postauricular	X		
occipital	X		
tonsillar	X		
submental	X		
submandibular	X		
superficial cervical chain	X		
posterior cervical	X		

deep cervical supraclavicular Auscultate • Carotid arteries • Thyroid	X X X X X X		
UPPER EXTREMITIES Inspect and palpate • Hands • Arms • Shoulders • Skin and nail characteristics Assess pulses • Radial • Brachial	 X X X X X X		
BACK AND POSTERIOR CHEST • Inspect skin and thoracic configuration • Palpate and percuss costovertebral angle	X X		
LUNGS Inspect respiration Palpate • Expansion • Tactile fremitus Percuss • Posterior chest • Lateral chest walls • Diaphragmatic excursion Auscultate • Posterior chest-comparing side to side • Anterior chest-comparing side to side • Lateral chest-comparing side to side • Bronchophony • Egophony • Whispered pectoriloquy	X X X X X X X X X O O O		
ANTERIOR CHEST: HEART & LUNGS Inspect • Skin, symmetry • Respiration • Respiratory effort • Pulsations or heaving Palpate	 X X X X		

• Chest wall • Precordium for thrills, heaves or pulsations. • Left chest to locate Apical Impulse • Tactile fremitus • Nodes-infraclavicular Axillary Percuss • Systematically Auscultate • Breath sounds • Heart sounds Aortic area Pulmonic area Erbs Point Tricuspid area Mitrial area	X X X X X X X X X X X X X		
Patient reclining at 45 degrees • Inspect for JV pulsations • Measure JV pressure	O O		
ABDOMEN • Inspect characteristics, contour, pulsations, movement • Auscultate all quadrants for BS • Auscultate arteries Aorta Renal Iliac Femoral • Percuss for Tone Liver borders Splenic dullness • Light palpation • Deep palpation Right costal margin for liver border Left costal margin for spleen Right and left kidneys Midline for aortic pulsations • Abdominal muscles	X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X		
FEET and LEGS Inspect • Skin • Hair distribution	X X		

• Muscle mass	X		
Palpate			
• Temperature	X		
• Edema	X		
• Pulses	X		
Dorsalis pedis	X		
Posterior tibial	X		
Popliteal	X		
NEUROLOGICAL EXAM			
• Cranial Nerves	X		
• Smell	0		
• Taste	0		
• Sensation	X		
• 2 point discrimination	0		
• Temperature	0		
MUSCULOSKELETAL			
• Reflexes			
Brachial	X		
Knee	X		
Achilles Tendon	X		
• Muscle strength	X		
• Squats	0		
• Cervical spine	X		
• Lumbar spine	X		
• Shoulder	0		
• Knee	0		
• Hip	0		
CONCLUDE EXAMINATION	X		