NCS Exam Preparation: Additional Resources

1. APTA Resources: [www.apta.org](http://www.apta.org)
   a. **Description of Specialty Practice (DSP): Neurologic**
      
      Published by the Neurology Section; includes Self-Assessment Tool booklet
      
      The Description of Specialty Practice: Neurologic serves as the basis for the specialist certification exams and is a valuable aid in determining your readiness for specialist certification.
      
      Available through APTA’s Online Store: reduced price for Section members;
      
      WHEN YOU APPLY TO TAKE THE NCS EXAM, YOU WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE SENT BOTH OF THESE RESOURCES (your application fee includes these 2 resources)
      
   b. **NCS Exam Study Groups**:
      
      When completing the Specialist Certification application to take the NCS examination, you have an option to request participation in an exam study group. Contact information of other applicants within your geographic region will be provided to you as a service run through the APTA Specialist Certification Department / American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties.
      
   c. **APTA Learning Center**:
      
      From the APTA homepage, you will see a heading under “Areas of Interest” that is called Tools and Resources. If you click on this, you will find access to the APTA Learning Center. Through this resource, you will find selected course content across a wide range of topics. Click on “Find a Course Now”. This allows you to search the course catalog by topic, and Neurology will be one of the options you can explore. Numerous offerings are available. Courses vary in price, with APTA member discounts available on all offerings.
      
   d. **Open Door Portal: access restricted to APTA members**
      
      Access is through the Tools and Resources heading listed under “Areas of Interest” on the homepage
      
      Creates links to multiple databases and health care literature including the Cochrane Library, Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature(CINAHL), PubMed, ProQuest, etc. The Physical Therapy Journal and the APTA Section Journals can be accessed through Open Door Portal.
      
   e. **Hooked on Evidence: access restricted to APTA members**
      
      Access is through the Tools and Resources heading listed under “Areas of Interest” on the homepage
      
      Member driven citations with summary of findings provided; allows for grouping and clinical scenario searches; this database contains information on research evidence on the effectiveness of physical therapy interventions; links to other search databases
2. **Neurology Section Resources:** [http://www.neuropt.org/](http://www.neuropt.org/)
   a. **NCS Resource List:** this is a list of resources exam takers have found useful in studying for the NCS exam. The list provides electronic links to the references whenever possible. To find this list on the Neurology Section website, go to the tab labeled “Healthcare Professionals” and then click on “Neurologic Specialist Certification”, which comes up along the left-hand menu.
   b. **Special Interest Groups:**
      The Neurology Section is comprised of Special Interest Groups in the areas of
      - Balance and Falls
      - Brain Injury
      - Degenerative Diseases
      - Spinal Cord Injury
      - Stroke
      - Vestibular Rehabilitation

      Information related to the Special Interest Groups may be accessed off the Neurology Section homepage—click on “Special Interest Groups”.
      By visiting the webpages for each of these Special Interest Groups, you will be able to access a wide variety of literature, patient videos, fact sheets, etc. that are specific to that health condition.

3. **Outside resources: a few examples**
   a. **Baylor College of Medicine—Department of Neurology: Case of the month**
      [http://www.bcm.edu/neurology/case.html](http://www.bcm.edu/neurology/case.html)

      Although this website is designed as an interactive site for Baylor’s medical residents, it offers the physical therapist a wide variety of neurologic case examples to explore. Many of these cases involve patients with more complicated or unusual diagnoses/clinical presentations. Patient history and exam data are provided. The clinical summary of the patient’s examination findings gives insight into how the medical diagnosis was reached and the differential diagnoses that might have been considered. Post-test questions allow the reader to consider the take-away messages considered to be most important in each case.

   b. **Neurological Cases: The University of Utah**
      [http://library.med.utah.edu/neurologicexam/cases/home_cases.html](http://library.med.utah.edu/neurologicexam/cases/home_cases.html)

      Patient examination videos augment patient history and findings in four separate patient cases.

   c. **Neurologic Exam Videos and Descriptions: An Anatomical Approach (University of Utah)**

      Website offers anatomical information and videos in the areas of mental status examination, cranial nerve exams, coordination, sensory, motor, and gait examinations. Pediatric neurologic examination videos and descriptions are also available through the same website.