Table 2

Positive and negative signs in the diagnosis of neuropathic pain

Positive signs	Description
Allodynia	Painful response to a non-painful stimulus e.g. cotton wool, cold metal etc
Hyperalgesia	Exaggerated painful response to painful stimuli e.g. pinprick compared with opposite side
Hyperpathia	Repeated innocuous stimuli produce pain
Autonomic signs	Local changes in skin colour, temperature, sweating or swelling

Negative signs	Description
Hypoaesthesia	Loss of normal sensation to non-painful stimulus
Hypoalgesia	Reduced sensation to painful stimuli. Often seen in peripheral neuropathies accompanied by a spontaneous burning sensation
Motor deficit	Weakness, paralysis, reduced reflexes e.g. post-stroke pain or in demyelination disorders