

## Unit 4 - REGULATORY SYSTEMS

### Reflex Actions

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

Muscles contract when they are stimulated, manipulated, or when they are pulled by gravity. Muscles also contract when the tendons attaching muscles to bones are stretched. This activity provides methods for assessing the function of the tendon reflexes. Read the instructions before beginning this activity.

| Reflex          | Location   | Expected Response                     |
|-----------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| biceps          | The arm is flexed at the elbow with the examiner's thumb over the biceps tendon in the antecubital area. Strike the thumb with a percussion hammer                               | flexion of the arm at the elbow       |
| triceps         | The arm is flexed at the elbow with the examiner's thumb over the triceps tendon on the outer aspect of the arm. Strike the thumb with a percussion hammer                       | straightening or extension of the arm |
| brachio-radials | Examiner's thumb supports extended arm in a relaxed position while the styloid process (bony prominence on the wrist) is struck with the hammer.                                 | flexion of the arm at the elbow       |
| patellar        | With the legs dangling free over the side of a chair or desk, tap directly below or inferior to the patella  | extension of the leg                  |
| Achilles tendon | Foot is held slight dorsiflexed position   | plantar flexion of the foot           |
| plantar         | Use a key, pin, or the end of their reflex hammer to press a line from the lateral border of the sole starting at the heel and continuing up and across to the ball of the foot. | flexion of all the toes               |

1. Which reflex was the strongest in you \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Which reflex was the strongest in your partner? \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Which reflex was the weakest in you \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Which reflexes do physicians commonly evaluate in routine examinations ?
5. Why do you think physicians use these reflexes ?