



NERVOUS ENERGY (1 OF 3)

BACKGROUND

Nerve impulses travel from one neuron (nerve cell) to another in the form of electrical signals. Each neuron consists of a cell body, short threadlike projections called dendrites, and one longer thread called an axon. The electrical signals are received by the dendrites of a neuron and then passed along the axon to the dendrites of adjacent neurons.

Interestingly, axons and dendrites don't actually touch. There is a space between them, called a synapse. So how does the electrical signal "jump" the gap? You could say the energy changes form. The electrical current causes chemicals in the axon tip to be released. These chemicals, called neurotransmitters, flow across the synapse and lock on to the dendrite of the next neuron, where they cause new electrical signals to be generated and passed on in the same manner.

You can use common electronic components to model how nerve impulses get relayed from one neuron to another in the body.

