Spontaneous activity (Figure 4): Normal muscle cells do not discharge spontaneously. Muscle cells that are undergoing denervation hypersensitivity or are depolarizing for other reasons may show spontaneous activity. This activity may take one of two forms: fibrillation potentials or fasciculation potentials. Both of these are electrical activity (and contraction) of muscle in the absence of action potentials in the motor nerve innervating them. The difference between the two is a matter of degree - fasciculations are spontaneous contractions of enough muscle fibers that the twitch is visible under the skin. Fibrillations are of single muscle fibers and are not visible. As you might surmise, the electrophysiological appearance of these potentials is also a matter of degree - a fibrillation potential is a small amplitude, short duration potential (it is about 1–5% of the CMAP you get by nerve stimulation). Fasciculation potentials are larger (although smaller than the CMAP) and longer in duration. Both are graded qualitatively (see the table below).