

Patient information factsheet

Electroencephalogram (EEG)

Your doctor has requested that you have an electroencephalogram (EEG).

An EEG is not a treatment, but a test designed to help with your diagnosis. It records the natural electrical patterns of the brain, or brainwaves, when electrodes are attached to your scalp. The test is pain free.

You have been sent an appointment and we have provided the following information so you know how to prepare and what to expect.

Before your test

Before attending your test please make sure you:

- continue to take your regular medication
- have meals as usual
- arrive with your hair freshly washed and dried and free from hairspray, mousse or gel (this is to ensure the electrodes stick to your scalp. Please bring a comb or hairbrush with you).

Attending your test

Please arrive on time and allow at least one hour for the test. If you arrive late it may be necessary to rebook your appointment.

We will ask you a few questions about your symptoms so please bring a family member or friend along with you to help you answer these questions if you wish.

During the test

Your head will be measured and marks made with a wax crayon. Your scalp will be prepared with a special cream, then 23 electrodes attached to your scalp using special sticky paste. Your brainwaves will then be recorded. An electrode will also be placed on each shoulder or arm to record your heart rhythm.

We do not use needles, give electric shocks or shave your head.

During the recording we may ask you to:

- attempt a short period of deep breathing
- watch a flashing light

You will be asked to give your written consent to these procedures before the test starts. This is to confirm you understand there is a very small risk (less than 1%) of the procedure causing you to have a seizure. Having a seizure could result in the loss of your driving licence. You may, of course, decline this part of the test.

Video images will be recorded at the same time as the EEG activity to help with your diagnosis.

We are a teaching hospital so student nurses and doctors often attend clinics. We will ask your permission before inviting students to observe your test.

After the test

You will be able to return to home or work and perform normal activities after the test.

The specialist performing your test (physiologist) will not be able to give you a result immediately after the test. The results need to be analysed by one of our consultants. The consultant will send a medical report to your doctor.

Further information

Please feel free to contact the department if there is any information you do not understand. If your appointment is not convenient please phone as soon as possible to rearrange it.

Clinical neurophysiology department

Telephone: 023 8120 6785 (between 8am and 4.30pm, or please leave a message on the answer machine).

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If you need a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or on audio tape, please telephone 023 8120 4688 for help.