

Patient information factsheet

Electroencephalogram (EEG)

We have given you this factsheet because your doctor has requested that you have an electroencephalogram (EEG). It explains what an EEG is and what will happen at your appointment, so you know how to prepare and what to expect. We hope it will help to answer some of the questions you may have. If you have any questions, please speak to a member of your healthcare team or contact us using the details at the end of this factsheet.

What is an EEG?

An EEG is a painless test that records brain activity.

During this test, electrodes (small sensors) are attached to the scalp to pick up the electrical signals produced by the brain.

How should I prepare for the test?

On the day of your test, you should:

- continue to take your regular medication
- continue to eat and drink 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)
- consider bringing a comb or a hairbrush if you think you might need to tidy your hair after the procedure

Where will the procedure take place?

We will perform the procedure in hospital, in the neurophysiology department. Please see your appointment letter for more information about where to go on the day.

What will happen during the test?

It is important that you arrive on time for your test. Please be aware that if you arrive late, we may have to rebook your test for another day.

The test will be performed by a specially trained healthcare professional called a clinical physiologist.

When you arrive for the test, we will explain the test to you in detail and answer any questions you may have.

We will then:

- measure your head using a tape measure
- use a wax crayon to mark where we need to place the electrodes

Patient information factsheet

- prepare your scalp with a special cream
- attach up to 30 electrodes to your scalp using a special paste (this paste will wash off with water)
- place an electrode on both of your shoulders or arms to record your heart rhythm

Once we have placed all the equipment correctly, we will then start to record your brainwaves.

At some point during the test, we will ask you to watch a flashing light. We may also ask you to hyperventilate by breathing fast and deeply. These exercises are 'activation procedures' meaning they can change your brainwaves and help give us more information. Before these exercises, we will ask you to sign a consent form. Signing this form confirms that you understand that there is a very small risk (less than 1%) that these exercises may cause you to have a seizure. You may decline this part of the test if you wish.

We will record video images at the same time as the EEG activity to help with your diagnosis.

Please note that 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.

How long will the test take?

The test will take approximately one hour.

What will happen after the test?

After the test, we will gently remove the electrodes and sticky paste using warm soapy water. Please note that you will need to wash your hair and body at home to fully remove the paste.

You will then be able to leave hospital and resume your normal daily activities.

When will I receive my results?

We will not be able to give you any results immediately after the test. This is because the results need to be analysed by one of our consultants before being sent to the doctor who referred you for the test. Your doctor will then contact you to discuss your results.

Further information

Please note that we see both children and adults in the neurophysiology department and there is a shared waiting room.

Contact us

If you have any further questions or concerns, or if your appointment is not convenient, please contact us.

Clinical neurophysiology department
Telephone: **023 8120 6785** (Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm)

If we're unable to answer your call, please leave a message on the answer machine with your name, hospital number and a brief reason for your call. We will return your call as soon as possible.

Useful links

www.nhs.uk/conditions/electroencephalogram

If you are a patient at one of our hospitals and need this document translated, or in another format such as easy read, large print, Braille or audio, please telephone **0800 484 0135** or email **patientsupporthub@uhs.nhs.uk**

For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital, please visit **www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalsupport**

Join our family of charity supporters with a monthly donation! It's a wonderful way to show your ongoing support of our patients and staff.

Scan the QR code or visit **southamptonhospitalscharity.org/donate**



**Southampton
Hospitals
Charity**

Charity Registration Numbers 1051543

