

Before your EEG

- Wash your hair the night before; the test works best on clean, dry hair, free from styling products.
- Meals and drinks can be taken as usual.
- Medication should be continued as usual, unless your doctor has advised otherwise

After your EEG

- The discs will be removed along with the majority of the paste. Any remaining paste will need to be washed out at home.

Results

The EEG needs careful analysis and a report will be prepared for your hospital doctor. This is usually done within 7-10 working days.

Any questions?

If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the Neurophysiology Department. Our direct telephone number is 0191 5699086.

Useful websites

www.nhs.uk
www.chsft.nhs.uk

This information was correct at the time of printing. While the Trust makes every reasonable effort to keep its information leaflets up to date, very recent changes may not yet be reflected in the guidance and you should discuss this with the clinical staff at the time of your appointment.

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City Hospitals Sunderland

ELECTRO- ENCEPHALOGRAM (EEG)

PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

Neurophysiology Department

Sunderland Royal Hospital

The first line of your appointment letter will inform you which type of EEG test you have been allocated.

EEG investigation

EEG stands for electroencephalogram. It is a recording of your “brainwaves” (the tiny electrical signals which your brain produces). This gives information about how your brain is functioning.

What happens during the EEG?

- You will sit in a chair, or lie on a couch, usually for approximately 45-60 minutes.
- Up to 21 small discs are applied to your scalp with a soft paste. Similar discs on each hand or shoulder record your heart rate.
- Usually, a video image of you will also be recorded, with sound (see “Consent for video”).
- During the EEG you will be asked to sit still for about 20 minutes, mostly with your eyes closed. Young children can sit on a parent’s/carer’s lap, and watch a DVD or play with small toys, closing their eyes for short periods if possible.
- You may be asked to breathe deeply for a short period (Hyperventilation) and/or be asked to watch a flashing light (Photic Stimulation) both of which might reveal additional brainwaves.

Risks associated with an EEG

In some people there is a small possibility that Hyperventilation and Photic Stimulation may trigger an epileptic seizure. In the very unlikely event that you do have an epileptic seizure your driving licence would be at risk. The Physiologist performing the test is trained to take care of you should a seizure occur.

You will be asked when you attend if you are happy to include these procedures as part of the test.

Sleep deprivation EEG

You may have been asked to deprive yourself of sleep before coming for your EEG. Sleep deprivation may increase the likelihood of a seizure occurring. Please refer to your appointment letter for instructions regarding sleep deprivation.

Sleep EEG with sedation

Sometimes sedation might be prescribed prior to your EEG. Please refer to your appointment letter for further information.

For safety reasons we strongly recommend the following advice for anyone who is sleep deprived or sedated:

- Do not drive a vehicle, go back to work / school, drink alcohol or use machinery for 24 hours.
- Do not make important decisions – such as signing of wills or other important documents for 24 hours.

- Have a responsible adult accompany you to and from the appointment.
- Rest upon returning home.

Why is video needed?

Video helps with the analysis of your EEG. If you have any symptoms during the test, this might be visible on the video and may be linked with possible brainwave changes. Also, normal movements can be seen on video and the associated EEG features are easily identified. If video is not possible, written notes of any symptoms, or movements, will be made by the Physiologist.

Consent for video

Please read the consent form immediately. You may sign it at home before attending for the test. If you have further questions you may prefer to wait and speak to the Physiologist on the day of the test before signing. Whichever you decide, please bring the consent form with you when you attend for your appointment.

Skin sensitivity

On rare occasions, some people may experience a skin reaction to the paste or preparation gel used to attach the EEG leads. If you have a skin condition, or are concerned that you may be particularly sensitive, please contact the department before your appointment to discuss this.