



Sleep deprived EEG test

This leaflet outlines what to expect when you come into hospital for a sleep deprived EEG test to try to find the cause of your symptoms.

What is an EEG?

An EEG is an ElectroEncephaloGram, which is the recording of electrical activity produced by the brain.

What is a sleep deprivation EEG test?

It is an EEG recording taken when you have been deprived of sleep. This makes it likely that you will sleep during the test, allowing us to record your sleep patterns. To do this we would like you to stay awake **all** night and remain awake until your appointment with us. It is important for the effectiveness of this test that you stop yourself from taking a short nap.

How is it done?

A clinical physiologist will take measurements of your head and make some marks on the skin. They will gently rub over the marks and then attach around 22 small metal discs, using a sticky paste. Each disc is attached by a lead to a monitor. A recording is then made. You will be lying down during this time.

The test will take about 1 to 1½ hours, after which the discs and paste will be removed and you will be able to go home. The paste will leave your hair with a sticky texture.

Due to your lack of sleep it is strongly recommended that you do not drive to or from this appointment. We advise you to ask someone to accompany you to and from hospital.

Will I feel anything?

You will feel the skin being rubbed before the discs are put on your head but the test is otherwise painless. No needles are involved.

What other measurements are made?

Some of the following may be needed during the test:

- **Deep breathing:** This may produce changes in your brainwave activity that could help with your diagnosis. You will be asked to take deep breaths for about 3 minutes. This often causes a light-headed feeling or tingling in the lips or fingers. This is normal and will pass off when you return to normal breathing.
- **Photic stimulation:** This is an important part of the test for people who may have seizures or blackouts caused by flashing lights. You will be asked to look at a bright flashing light. Very rarely, the deep breathing or photic stimulation may cause a seizure, but the clinical physiologist will be observing the EEG closely and will modify the test if you appear to be sensitive to either procedure.

- **Video:** A video recording of the examination is usually made as part of the test.

What preparation is needed?

- Please come with clean hair, free from grease, hair spray etc. Head lice must be treated. You may want to bring a comb or brush with you.
- Loose clothing will be most comfortable.
- Jewellery may have to be removed.
- If you take any medicines or tablets, you should continue to take them at the usual times. You may also eat normally beforehand.

Can the EEG monitor read my mind?

No, we only record the electrical activity from your brain, and are not able to read any thoughts or emotions you may have.

Is this shock treatment?

No, we are only recording signals produced naturally. This is a test, not a treatment.

What happens if I have a seizure during the test?

Lack of sleep can sometimes cause attacks in people prone to epilepsy. If you have an attack during the test, we will make sure you are well enough to go home. If you hold a driving licence, you will need to inform the DVLA (as for all attacks); this may affect your ability to hold a driving licence.

Will I get the result the same day?

No, the results need to be analysed afterwards and a full report will be sent to the doctor who referred you for the test.

If you have any questions or concerns, and if you have any allergies, please talk to the clinical physiologist before the start of the test.

Contacting us

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To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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