

Having a day case EEG

This leaflet explains about having a day case EEG, including the benefits and risks and what you can expect when you come to hospital. If you have any further questions, please speak to the clinical physiologist looking after you or call 0207 188 3953 Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm, to talk to a physiologist.

What is a day case EEG?

- An electroencephalogram (EEG) is a test to record the electrical activity produced by the brain. Recording this activity can provide doctors with useful information about how your brain is working. This helps to diagnose conditions that affect the brain.
- This particular test will continuously monitor your EEG over a more prolonged period during the day, typically between 9am to 4pm, within the EEG department.
- A video will be recorded of you as a patient throughout the recording. We are able to record any movements or episodes which occur during the EEG. This helps us to understand the EEG recording.
- There are no alternative tests – the EEG is not a scan of the brain.

Why am I being referred for this test?

- You may have had previous EEG tests performed in the department lasting 1-2 hours. Sometimes we do not record any abnormal brain activity or typical episodes during this time.
- A prolonged recording can be used to increase the chances of us recording abnormal brain activity or recording an episode and can help us understand how many episodes you have over a period of time.

How can I prepare for this test?

- You should take your medication and have meals as normal (unless instructed by your referring consultant).
- Please wash your hair but **do not** use hair gels, oils or other hair products.
- It is difficult and sometimes impossible to perform the test if you have a hair weave or extensions; please remove these before the test.
- Please wear loose clothing for the test as extra sensors may need to be placed on your body – typically your shoulders.
- Do not drink any tea, coffee or energy drinks, for example Red Bull®, before your test.
- If you have children they should be accompanied by another adult or left at home/school.
- If you have been sent instructions to sleep deprive yourself, you should do this the night before the EEG.
- Please bring sufficient books, magazines, DVDs to keep you occupied for the day.
- Please bring any food and drinks that you will need for the day as the hospital is unable to provide these.

Asking for your consent

We want to involve you in decisions about your care and treatment. If you decide to go ahead, you will be asked to sign a consent form. This states that you agree to have the treatment and you understand what it involves.

If you would like more information about our consent process, please speak to a member of staff caring for you.

What happens on the day?

- You will come to the EEG department to be set up for the test. This will involve attaching small metal disks, called electrodes, to your scalp. It is a painless procedure and will be similar to EEGs you may have had in the past.
- To begin, the physiologist will mark measurements onto your scalp with a soft crayon. After rubbing the marks with a gel, each electrode is attached to the relevant point using a sticky paste (much like Vaseline®).
- Tape is placed over each electrode to secure them then finally some netting will be placed over the wires in order to keep the electrodes in place during the day.
- The electrodes are plugged into a small box known as a headbox, which records the EEG trace. This box can be placed into a small bag allowing you to move in the room or go to the toilet.
- Usually, you will be asked to move to the bed and be made comfortable; recording will then begin.

You may be asked to do three things during the recording. Full explanations of each part will be given by the physiologist during the test.

Part 1 – Relaxation

You will be asked to close your eyes and relax. If you feel drowsy during this period you are encouraged to fall asleep. This period is extended during a sleep test in order to obtain a recording of your brain waves while you sleep.

Part 2 – Deep breathing

You may be asked to perform this three minute exercise dependent on your medical history. This exercise may produce short term changes in the electrical activity of the brain which can help in your diagnosis. The physiologist will instruct you how to breathe during this time. You may experience dizziness or tingling in your hands, feet or lips when performing this exercise – this is normal and will pass once you breathe normally again.

Part 3 – Flashing lights

The physiologist will ask you to look at a lamp which will flash at different speeds for short periods of time. This exercise can help in your diagnosis, particularly if you have seizures or blackouts caused by flashing lights.

What are the risks?

There are no known side effects as a result of having an EEG. There is a very small risk that parts two and three of the test could cause a seizure or blackout. If this occurs the exercise will be stopped immediately and you will be looked after in the department until you are well enough to go home.

What happens after the test?

- The electrodes will be removed from your scalp and your hair lightly cleaned to remove the paste. Some paste may remain in your hair making it feel sticky – this will wash out with normal shampoo.
- There are no side effects due to the test. You can resume normal activities immediately after the test.
- If you have had a sleep deprived test, you may still be very sleepy so we advise somebody to aid you to travel home.
- The test is analysed by the physiologist and consultant neurophysiologist; a full report will be written and sent to your referring consultant.
- You will receive the results from your referring consultant; results are not available immediately after the test.
- If you are not aware of a follow-up appointment with your referring consultant, you will need to contact them to arrange this.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about the EEG, please call the Clinical Neurophysiology department to talk to a physiologist. **t:** 020 7188 3953, 8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday.

The Epilepsy Action website also has a number of useful resources. **w:** www.epilepsy.org.uk

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit **w:** www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets

Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline. **t:** 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

t: 020 7188 8801 (PALS) **e:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk

t: 020 7188 3514 (complaints) **e:** complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk

Language and accessible support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch. **t:** 020 7188 8815 **e:** languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk

NHS 111

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day. **t:** 111

Was this leaflet useful?

We want to make sure the information you receive is helpful to you. If you have any comments about this leaflet, we would be happy to hear from you, fill in our simple online form, **w:** www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets, or **e:** patientinformationteam@gstt.nhs.uk

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