



Neurodiagnostic Department

EEG Instructions

Instructions for everyone getting an EEG:

- For questions or to change appointments call the EEG Laboratory 540.741.2000.
- Shampoo your hair the night before your EEG. Do not put any spray, lotions or oil in your hair.
- You may eat, drink, and take prescribed medications as usual. Avoid caffeine.
- If the study is for a child bring distractions, i.e. favorite toy, blanket or stuffed animal, electronics.
- If the child is very young and is unable to hold still for the placement of the electrodes, it may be necessary for you to swaddle the child for the test (at parental discretion).
- **Please do not allow sleep on the way to the laboratory.** The test is more useful if it contains drowsiness and sleep.
- The EEG department opens at 8:00 a.m.
- Please arrive at the EEG lab 15 minutes before your scheduled appointment.

Sleep-Deprived EEG

If your physician instructs you to have a *SLEEP-DEPRIVED EEG*, please follow the instructions below:

- Follow your physician instructions concerning sleep times. Otherwise, see below:
- For sleep deprivation studies in children, please put the child to bed at the usual bedtime. Parents should awaken the child early depending on their age:
 - Under 3 years old: awaken at 4:00 a.m. or schedule appointment around normal naptime.
 - 3-11 years: awaken at 2:00 a.m.
 - 12 and older: awaken at 12:00 a.m.
- Adults having a sleep deprived EEG need to awaken at 12:00 a.m.
- **Please do not go to sleep in the car or while awaiting the EEG.**

What is an EEG?

An electroencephalogram is a test to detect and record the electrical activity of the brain.



How is it performed?

1. Report to the EEG laboratory at your assigned time.
2. Go to the bathroom before you go into the room.
3. You will lie on a bed during the test.
4. An EEG technician measures your head and marks the placement for each individual electrode. The skin is prepped by scrubbing these areas (the size of a pencil eraser) with a cotton swab and exfoliant lotion.
5. 26 electrode discs (the size of a pencil eraser) are placed onto your head and held in place with conductive paste or they may be glued in place.
6. Your brain waves are typically recorded for 20-40 minutes.
7. The electrodes are removed at the end of your test and you may leave.
8. There are no special requirements after the test.
9. Please follow up with your ordering physician regarding the EEG results.

Ambulatory EEG (24, 48 or 72 hours)

If your physician instructs you to have an *Ambulatory EEG*:

What to Expect:

A technologist applies the electrodes with a sticky, glue-like substance called collodion. You will be asked to keep a diary to record any routine activities such as reading, exercising, eating, sleeping or crying (for children), to correlate with any abnormal activity during the time period for which you are recording.

At your next appointment (24 hours), the electrodes will be removed, or you will be re-prepped for additional monitoring. You can participate in your routine activities during the day; however, you should refrain from activities or exercise that may disrupt electrode placement.

Patient Preparation:

- Please have clean hair without any hair styling products, braids or weaves.
- Please wear a button-down shirt for both appointments. (Please note you will be unable to take off tight fitting shirts or hoodies over the electrodes and monitoring device.)
- Continue to take prescribed medication unless otherwise indicated by your physician.
- A parent or guardian must accompany minors (children under age 17) to both appointments.
- The first day of an ambulatory EEG set-up procedure lasts two hours.
- The appointment to remove the EEG lasts one hour.