

Electroencephalography (EEG) Patient Information Guide

Description of Electroencephalography (EEG)

The electroencephalogram (EEG) is a simple test that measures brain waves. The EEG is used in the evaluation of brain disorders. Most commonly it is used to show the type and location of the activity in the brain during a seizure. It also is used to evaluate people who are having problems associated with brain function. These problems might include confusion, coma, tumors, & long-term difficulties with thinking or memory, or weakening of specific parts of the body (such as weakness associated with a stroke.)

An EEG is also used to determine brain death. It may be used to prove that someone on life-support equipment has no chance of recovery.

An EEG is a painless and mostly passive test in which the patient rests in a comfortable position with 20-30 electrodes placed at various spots around the scalp. The electrodes do not carry a current to the scalp; instead they only read the electronic currents coming from the brain.

Preparation

- Plan on two hours for the EEG.
- **Wash your hair either the night before or the morning of the EEG. Do not use grease, hair spray, oils or conditioners.**
- **Avoid caffeine coffee, tea, chocolate, soft drinks, and alcohol for 8 hours prior to the test.**
- Eat a normal meal at your usual mealtime before the test.
- Take your daily medications as prescribed by your physician.
- It is recommended that you only sleep about half the amount of your normal sleeping hours.
- Please do not bring children. If your child is having the test, do not bring other children.

During the Procedure

During the electroencephalogram the patient is mainly asked to relax patiently with their eyes closed. However, during the test, the patient may be asked to do a number of different activities that will stimulate different areas of the brain. Some of these activities include opening and closing the eyes, breathing rapidly, watching a flashing light, and performing some simple math, reading, or looking at certain objects.

Results

It is our policy to handle all test results in a secure and confidential manner. Our physician will explain and go over the results to patient right after the completion of the test. A copy of the test report will also be sent to your referring physician. If you would like to receive a copy of the report for your record, please inform our staff and we'll be happy to send you one. Most test results are available within one to two days of testing.