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Information for patients and carers

Ambulatory EEG Test (Electroencephalogram)

Neurophysiology

You have been referred for an Ambulatory EEG (electroencephalogram) test at the Royal Preston hospital. This leaflet will give you more information on what to expect from this test.

What is an Ambulatory EEG?

An Ambulatory EEG is a diagnostic test that is used to record the electrical activity of the brain. It is a painless and harmless test that can be carried out on patients of any age.
There are several reasons your doctor may have referred you for an EEG including: seizures, dizziness, staring episodes, memory problems or sleep disturbances. An EEG simply measures the brainwaves; it cannot measure intelligence, thoughts, or feelings.

The test is carried out for at least 24 hours and its purpose is to record the brain activity during one or more of your episodes.

Do I need to do anything before the test?

Make sure that your hair is clean and free from any products such as hairspray or gels.
You can take all medications as usual prior to the test, unless otherwise directed by your doctor. Please bring an up-to-date list of medications with you to your appointment. You can eat and drink as normal.

What happens during the EEG?

A clinical physiologist will carry out your Ambulatory EEG; they will fully explain what will happen during the test and ask you questions about what has been happening to you.

They will firstly measure your head and then 21 small electrodes will be glued onto your scalp, this may feel slightly cold and scratchy.
The electrodes will record your brain activity onto a small recorder, which you will have to keep with you at all times. You will be able to go home but you will have to return the next day to have the data removed from the recorder and the electrodes checked.

The test may be carried out over several days. This is dependent on your symptoms and will be discussed with you at the time of your test. A diary will be given to you to record your daily activities and any episodes you may have, and this will be discussed with you at the time of your test. It is important to note that you will not be able to take a shower or bath whilst having the ambulatory as there is a risk of damaging the equipment.

Are there any side effects or risks?

There are no side-effects from the test. You can return to your normal daily activities following the test**. Please inform the department prior to the test if you are pregnant.**

What happens after the test?

After the recording is finished the clinical physiologist will remove all the electrodes from your scalp and clean your hair to remove most of the sticky paste and glue, using warm water and acetone. Your hair can feel sticky after the test, so you are advised to wash it with warm water and shampoo when you get home. You may need to wash your hair a few times to completely remove the glue.
It may take a few weeks for the results to get back to your consultant. They will contact you in due course to discuss the results and any further treatment options if necessary.

Contact details

Should you require further advice or information please contact:

Department of Clinical Neurophysiology
Royal Preston Hospital
Sharoe Green Lane
Fulwood Preston
PR2 9HT
Telephone: **01772 522559**
Email: neurophysiology@lthtr.nhs.uk

Sources of further information

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk
www.nhs.uk
www.accessable.co.uk
www.patient.co.uk
www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/veteran-aware
https://bepartofresearch.nihr.ac.uk/

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www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets

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If you want to stop smoking, you can also contact Smokefree Lancashire on Freephone **08081962638**

Please ask a member of staff if you would like help in understanding this information.
This information can be made available in large print, audio, Braille and in other languages.

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