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Information for patients and carers

EEG Test (Electroencephalogram)

Neurophysiology

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

What is an EEG?

An 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.

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 EEG, they will fully explain what will happen during the test and ask you questions about what has been happening to you. The test will be video recorded for the purpose of the consultant reviewing the EEG.

They will firstly measure your head and make some small marks with a soft pencil. 21 small electrodes will be placed on your scalp with a sticky paste; this will feel slightly cold and scratchy. One electrode will also be placed on each shoulder to measure your heart rate throughout the test. Once all the electrodes are on you will be asked to lie down on a bed and the recording will begin, which will last approximately 20 minutes. You will not feel anything during the test and will be asked to lie still with your eyes closed for most of the time.

During the test you may be asked to carry out a simple breathing exercise and be shown some flashing lights. These parts of the test will be explained in more detail to you on the day, and consent is required for these actions.

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, including driving.
In some people, there is a very small chance they may experience one of their typical episodes during the flashing lights or deep breathing exercise. However, this is very rare, and we will fully explain any possible risks beforehand.
If you have a driving licence, you are required to inform the DVLA if you have a seizure. There are no risks to pregnant ladies or their unborn children from this test.

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 the sticky paste, using warm water and cotton wool. Your hair can feel sticky after the test, so you are advised to wash it with warm water and shampoo when you get home.
It will take approximately 2 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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Division: Medicine
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