

Neurophysiology department

# Your ambulatory electroencephalogram (EEG)

## Information for patients, relatives, and carers

This leaflet explains what an ambulatory EEG is and how to prepare for it. We hope it answers questions that you or those who care for you may have. This leaflet does not replace the discussion between you and your care team but aims to help you understand more about what is discussed. If there is anything that you do not understand please ask your care team.

### What is an ambulatory electroencephalogram (EEG)?

An ambulatory EEG records the electrical activity in the brain. You may have had an EEG test in the department before that lasted between one and two hours. An ambulatory EEG records the brain activity for a longer period, usually up to 24 hours.

The purpose of this test is to capture one of your typical episodes in your own home.

### Preparing for the test

- Continue to take your medication as normal
- You can eat and drink as normal
- Please bring a list of your current medication with you to the appointment
- Please wash your hair before the test and do not use any hair products such as gel or hairspray
- Please remove any hair extensions/weave/wig before the EEG
- Please wear loose clothing, ideally a top and shirt which you can unbutton from the front
- Bring a hat with you if possible
- You may wish to bring a brush or comb with you to tidy your hair after the test

**Please arrive on time for your appointment. If you are running late, please call us on the appropriate number listed on page 3, otherwise we may have to cancel or reschedule your test.**

### During your visit

You will need to make two visits to the department within 24 hours.

#### At your first visit:

- you will be called in by the clinical physiologist who will explain the test and ask you to sign a consent form

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- they will ask about your medical history and to see the list of your current medication
  - We will measure your head and mark it with a crayon and rub this off using an abrasive gel which can feel like a small scratch
  - Electrodes (small metal discs) will be attached to your head using a sticky paste, followed by a special skin glue
  - The electrodes will be attached to a recording unit which will be placed in a small bag that can be worn around your body. This will allow you to walk around freely
  - We will give you a diary to record details of your activities and any typical attacks during the recording
  - We will show you how to use the event button if you do have an attack
  - The appointment will take approximately 90 minutes

**During the recording:**

- avoid getting the electrodes and bag wet
- please do not take a shower or bath
- please do not chew gum
- please do not do any sports activities
- you can travel but for security reasons and, as a precaution, please carry this leaflet with you

**On your second visit:**

- you will need to return the diary to the physiologist. If you had no attacks during the recording please do not worry as the EEG can still provide useful information
- the physiologist will gently remove the electrodes and skin glue using a special solution
- your hair may feel sticky but the glue will come off when you wash your hair with shampoo and use a comb to remove any small particles
- the second visit takes approximately 60 minutes
- the results will be analysed and a report will be sent out to your consultant in about two to three weeks

## Risk or complications following the test

There are no common side effects of an EEG. On rare occasions, the skin can be slightly sore around the areas where the electrodes and glue were applied. These symptoms should start to ease once the electrodes are removed. If you have any concerns please speak with the clinical physiologist.

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## Contact details

If you cannot make your test or have any questions or concerns about your appointment please contact the relevant neurophysiology department:

- St Marys Hospital: **020 3312 6628**
- Charing Cross Hospital: **020 3311 1329 / 7515**

We are open Monday–Friday, 09.00–17.00.

## How to find us

Please refer to your letter to see which site you need to attend.

To find out more about our sites visit: [www.imperial.nhs.uk/our-locations](http://www.imperial.nhs.uk/our-locations)

## How do I comment on my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3313 0088** (Charing Cross Hospital) or **020 3312 7777** (St Mary's Hospital). You can also email PALS at [imperial.pals@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.pals@nhs.net) The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street  
London W2 1NY

Email: [ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net](mailto:ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net)

Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

## Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or alternative languages. Please email the communications team:  
[imperial.communications@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.communications@nhs.net)

## Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website: [www.imperial.nhs.uk](http://www.imperial.nhs.uk)