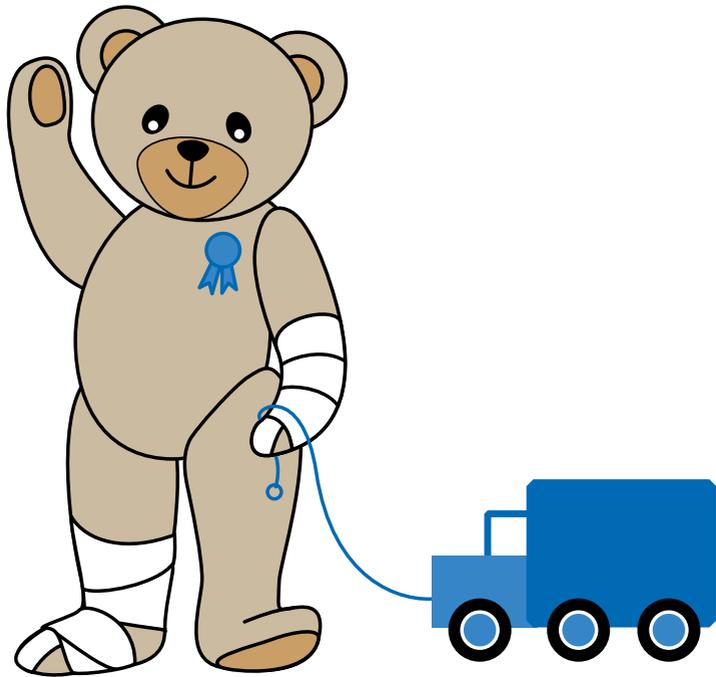


EEG (Electroencephalogram) on a child

Neurophysiology Department



Patient information leaflet

This leaflet aims to provide information for parents or carers who are asked to bring a child to the Royal Surrey County Hospital for an EEG test. It describes what happens before, during and after the test, together with an explanation of any risks. You may wish to discuss the details with your child or let them read the leaflet themselves, as appropriate.

What is an EEG?

An electroencephalogram (EEG) is a test to record the electrical activity of the brain. As the brain works, a series of nerve impulses produce electrical signals within the brain. These signals (brainwaves) can be recorded through the scalp and give an indication of the health of your child's brain.

A video recording will be taken at the same time as the EEG. This is done so that any movements and/or behaviour noted during the recording can be linked to the brain activity seen on the computer. For more information, please refer to the attached video consent form.

Why is my child having this test?

Your child has been referred for an EEG test to aid your doctor in reaching a diagnosis.

What should I do before the test?

- Please ensure that your child's hair is clean and free from gel/lacquer when attending for the test.
- If your child has head lice, please ensure treatment has been successfully completed before the test.
- Your child should take any medication as normal unless otherwise directed by your doctor. It would be helpful if you would bring a list of any medication your child is taking.
- Your child may eat as normal.

What does the test involve?

The test will be carried out by a Clinical Physiologist who will explain the procedure and take some details of your child's medical history. These details will be passed on to the Neurophysiologist (specialist doctor) who interprets and reports on the EEG after you have left the department.

Your child's head will be measured and small marks made on his/her scalp with a soft pencil. About 20 small discs (electrodes) are then applied to the scalp by parting the hair and using a small dot of adhesive paste. The paste and pencil marks will be easily removed after the test although you may wish to wash your child's hair again later.

The department sees many children of all ages. For a routine EEG young children are able to sit on their parent's lap for their test; older children may be happy to lie on the bed with their parent(s) at their side. At times during the test you can read to your child or listen to music/watch a DVD/play with toys. The recording will take approximately 20 minutes. Both parents are welcome to accompany their child if they wish, but we would ask that young siblings are not brought along if at all possible. Please bring a favourite toy, DVD, or a feed for young patients.

Does the procedure hurt?

EEG is a painless procedure.

How long will the test last?

Your child's appointment will last approximately 1 hour in total.

What else may be involved?

Children who are able to blow are encouraged to do so for a couple of minutes during the test. Some find that blowing a windmill will help with this. If your child's main or only symptom is blank spells or "daydreaming" episodes, the breathing exercise may produce a blank spell. This will greatly help in reaching a diagnosis for your child. A flashing light is also used for a small part of the test to check if your child is sensitive to a flickering light. Both these procedures (called activation procedures) are very useful for obtaining further information that does not show up when your child is simply resting.

Are there any risks or side effects?

The EEG recording is a harmless procedure. The electrodes pick up electrical activity from the brain but don't give out electrical signals so they don't affect the brain or cause any pain.

On very rare occasions the activation procedures mentioned above may cause a fit (not just a blank spell). Your physiologist is aware of the potential risk and will be watching your child's EEG carefully. You may choose for your child not to have the activation procedures carried out, in which case the rest of the test will be carried out as normal. The physiologist will check that you are happy for your child to perform them at the start of the test.

There are no other serious risks or side effects.

Are there any alternatives?

EEG is a diagnostic test and there is no alternative. If you would prefer that your child did not have the test done you would need to discuss your options with your referring doctor.

What happens after the test?

After the electrodes have been removed from your child's scalp, you will then be free to go home if your child has no other tests or appointments planned.

You will not get the results of the test on the same day. The EEG will be analysed by the Clinical Physiologist, and reported by the Consultant Neurophysiologist. The EEG report will then be sent to the doctor or consultant who referred your child. They should receive this within 2 weeks.

If you have any further questions, please contact the Neurophysiology department on

Telephone: 01483 464128

Further information about EEG testing is available from many organisations including:

- **UK Epilepsy Helpline (Freephone) 0808 800 5050**

Website: www.epilepsy.org.uk

Email: helpline@epilepsy.org.uk

Txt msg: 07537 410044

Twitter: @epilepsyadvice

- Or visit **www.epilepsysociety.org.uk**

References

Inducing Sleep for Paediatric EEG: A National Service Evaluation
Catania, S. J, Kandler, R. H, Pang, C, Notghi, L
J Association of Neurophysiological Scientists 2015 8(2) 71-77

Contact details

If you have any further questions, please contact the Neurophysiology department.

Telephone: 01483 464128

PALS and Advocacy contact details

Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

Telephone: 01483 402757

Email: rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net

Opening hours: 9.00am–3.00pm, Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

Past review date: November 2017

Future review date: November 2020

Author: Sarah Bettini

PIN171127–1355

