

Electroencephalogram (EEG)

What is an electroencephalogram (EEG)?

The EEG shows the doctor how your child's brain is working. It will help the doctor diagnose your child's condition. The EEG picks up tiny electrical impulses in the brain and records them while your child is awake and asleep. The doctor looks at a pattern of impulses for clues on how to treat your child's condition. The EEG does not give off electricity. It does not shock or hurt your child.

What do I need to know before the EEG?

- Wash your child's hair the night before the EEG. Do not put anything else on your child's hair or scalp. This includes things like such as oil, conditioner, mousse, cream rinse or hairspray.
- Hair must be free of braids, extensions, weaves or hairpieces. If we are unable to easily get to your child's scalp the EEG may need to be rescheduled.
- It is very important that your child sleep for the EEG. Use the chart below for your child's age to help prepare your child for the test. Your child should go to bed at least 2 hours later than normal.

If your child is not able to sleep for the test, the EEG may need to be done again.

Your child's age	Sleep Instructions
Less than 6 months old	Do not let your child sleep during the 2 hours before coming to the EEG or during the drive to the hospital.
6 months to 3½ years	Wake your child at 5:00 a.m. (or 2 hours before normal waking time). Do not let your child take a nap. It is important to keep your child awake during the drive to the hospital.
3½ to 6 years	Wake your child at 4:00 a.m. (or 3 hours before normal waking time). Do not let your child take a nap. It is important to keep your child awake during the drive to the hospital.
6 years and older	Wake your child at 2:00 a.m. (or 5 hours before normal waking time). Do not let your child take a nap. It is important to keep your child awake during the drive to the hospital.
Teens	Try to stay awake all night without any naps!

- Bring your child's favorite blanket, pillow, toy or music CD.
- Give your child a meal before the EEG unless the doctor told you not to.
- Do not give your child anything with caffeine. This includes chocolate, coffee, tea or some sodas such as Pepsi®, Coke®, Mountain Dew®, or Mello Yellow®.
- Give your child their regular medicines before the EEG unless the doctor told you not to. Bring a list of these medicines with you.

How is the EEG done?

- Your child's head will be measured. Marks will be drawn on your child's head with a red or blue marking pencil.
- A cotton swab dipped in a special cleaning lotion will be used to clean your child's skin.
- Small electrodes will be put on your child's scalp. A soft white paste or liquid glue may be used to make the electrodes stick. If glue is used, a machine that blows air onto your child's head will be used to dry the glue. It makes a sound that your child will hear. The electrodes and glue will not hurt. Your child's hair will not be shaved or cut.
- The EEG recording will be done while your child is awake and asleep.
- Your child will be asked to watch a flashing light at one point during the recording. If old enough, your child will also be asked to breathe very fast for a short time. This may cause a certain pattern of electrical impulses to occur during the EEG.
- The EEG will take 1 to 1½ hours. When it is done, the wires will be removed. Any paste will be removed using a warm, damp washcloth. Any glue used will be cleaned from your child's scalp using a remover with a strong smell. Once you take your child home, you may wash your child's hair with shampoo. If any glue remains, take it off with fingernail polish remover. Do not get the polish remover in your child's eyes.



Results are sent to the doctor who ordered the EEG in about 7 to 10 days.

NOTE: It is very important that your child sleeps for the EEG. Sleep medicine (sedation) is not used. If your child cannot sleep during the EEG, the test may need to be done again. Follow the sleep instructions chart the night before the EEG.

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns. Call Clinical Neurophysiology at (414) 266-6828 if:

- You are running late.
- **You cannot keep your child's appointment.**
- Your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This sheet was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.