

Neurophysiology

Sleep melatonin EEG (Electroencephalograph) test

What is a sleep melatonin EEG test?

A sleep Melatonin EEG test is a simple recording of the tiny electrical signals produced by your brain. Some EEG changes remain hidden when you are awake and can only be seen when you are drowsy or asleep. These signals form patterns. Changes in these patterns may help your doctor to diagnose your problem. The test is done while you are asleep.

Melatonin is an unlicensed medicine in the UK. In other countries, such as the USA, it can be bought over the counter without restriction. Several studies have demonstrated a good response in children to help them sleep. Unlike medications that are used to sedate children, melatonin induces natural sleep and does not cause problems with breathing or prolonged drowsiness afterwards. It has been shown to be a safe medicine. Some studies have reported side effects such as headaches, increased heart rate, reduced temperature and itching.

Birmingham Children's Hospital performed a trial using melatonin for EEG and none of the children had any side effects.

Why have you been referred for this test?

Your consultant has asked us to do a sleep recording. Some EEG changes remain hidden when you are awake and can only be seen



Patient Information

when you are drowsy or asleep. This EEG test will give the doctors further information and help them in classifying your seizure type(s) and epilepsy. This should help them to see if any changes to your treatment or care plan are needed to refine your future treatment and care plan.

Where is it done?

Please come to the Neurophysiology department at the time given on your appointment letter. The Clinical Physiologists (CP) will take you and your child to the ward, where nurse will give the liquid Melatonin. You and your child will then be taken back to the Neurophysiology department.

We will do the EEG in a darkened room. Once the electrodes are attached to your child's head using sticky paste and tape, the lights will be dimmed. Your child will be encouraged to lie on the bed or sit on your lap (if under 3 years of age). The CP will record the EEG for up to 1 hour or until your child wakes up.

If possible, try to keep your child awake late the evening before the appointment and then wake them early the next morning. This may help them fall asleep more easily. It may also be helpful to bring a toy or your child's own comforter if they have one. Make sure your child has had an appropriate meal or snack before the appointment, as most children sleep better when not hungry.

After waking from the EEG, your child will be able to return home.

How is it done?

When you arrived small metal discs will be placed on your head. A special cream will hold them in place. You will then be asked to lie down while the test is done. It is completely painless. The room is quiet, and the lights are dimmed. Most patients fall asleep within 20 minutes. Do not worry if you do not fall asleep, some changes can be revealed due to the sleep deprivation.

Patient Information

Video recording

It is very useful to make a video recording of you during the test. Any movements you may make can affect the test and this can be seen on the video. The video will be kept as part of your confidential medical records.

You will be asked to give your consent to be filmed when you arrive in the department. If you choose not to be filmed, the test will be performed in the same way.

Do you need to bring anything with you?

Bring a list of any medicines you are taking and continue to take medicines that you are already taking. You can bring something to eat or drink or toys, and iPads to keep your child busy.

When will we get the results?

You will not get any results at the end of your visit. A consultant neurophysiologist will review your test results in detail and a written report will be sent to the consultant who requested the test. They will give you your results at a follow-up appointment.

If you have any concerns regarding the test, please call 024 7696 5121 between 9am and 4.15pm, Monday to Friday.

If you arrive more than 15 minutes late without prior arrangement, we may need to make you another appointment.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact the booking centre on 0800 252 060 and they will do their best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

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Document History

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