

# Patient Preparation Instructions for EEG Testing

## Routine EEG (30-minute recording) and Sleep-Deprived EEG (60 Minute Recording)

Please follow these instructions carefully before your EEG appointment. Proper preparation helps the technologist obtain a clear, high-quality recording.

**Important:** An EEG is painless and non-invasive. Small electrodes are placed on the scalp using conductive paste. The test records the brain's electrical activity; it does not send electricity into the body.

### Routine EEG - 30-Minute Recording

- **Wash your hair:** Wash and dry your hair before the appointment. Your scalp should be clean and free of oils.
- **Do not use hair products:** Do not apply gel, hairspray, mousse, pomade, leave-in conditioner, hair oil, dry shampoo, or other styling products.
- **Eat normally:** Have your usual meals unless your physician has given you different instructions. Avoid arriving hungry.
- **Take medications as prescribed:** Continue your regular medications unless your referring physician or neurologist specifically tells you otherwise. Bring an up-to-date medication list.
- **Limit excess caffeine:** Avoid unusually large amounts of coffee, tea, energy drinks, or other caffeinated beverages before the test. Follow any specific instructions given by the EEG clinic.
- **Bring relevant information:** Bring your health card/identification as required, your EEG requisition if it has not already been sent, and a list of current Anti-seizure medications.
- **Allow enough time:** The EEG recording is approximately 30 minutes for routine recordings and 60 minutes for sleep deprived recordings. However, the full appointment is longer because electrode application, setup, and removal are required which may amount to an additional 30 minutes.

### During a Routine EEG

You will usually rest quietly with your eyes open and closed at different times. The technologist may ask you to perform deep breathing (hyperventilation) and may use flashing lights (photic stimulation) when clinically appropriate. You may also be encouraged to relax or sleep.

### Sleep-Deprived EEG

A sleep-deprived EEG is performed when your physician wants to increase the likelihood of recording drowsiness or sleep, which can provide additional information that may not appear during a fully awake recording.

- **Follow the sleep-deprivation instructions provided by the clinic:** The amount of sleep permitted can vary by age and clinical situation. If you were given a specific bedtime, wake-up time, or number of hours of sleep, follow those instructions exactly.
- **Do not stay awake all night unless specifically instructed:** Sleep deprivation should match the instructions provided for your appointment.

- **Avoid caffeine and stimulants:** Unless your clinic tells you otherwise, avoid coffee, tea, cola, energy drinks, and other caffeinated or stimulant products before a sleep-deprived EEG because they can make it harder to fall asleep.
- **Wash and dry your hair:** Your hair and scalp must be clean and free of styling products, oils, sprays, gels, or leave-in products.
- **Eat before the appointment:** Have a normal meal unless instructed otherwise. Hunger can make it more difficult to relax and sleep.
- **Take regular medications unless instructed otherwise:** Do not stop antiseizure medication or any other prescription medication on your own. Medication changes should only be made under the direction of your physician.
- **Plan safe transportation:** Sleep deprivation can cause significant drowsiness and reduced alertness. If you are very tired, arrange for someone else to drive you to and from the appointment.
- **Bring comfort items when appropriate:** For children or patients who have difficulty sleeping in unfamiliar settings, a familiar blanket or comfort item may be helpful if permitted by the clinic.

## Please Tell the EEG Technologist Before Testing

- If you have had a seizure or unusual event recently, including the approximate date and time.
- If you did not follow the requested sleep-deprivation instructions.
- If you took caffeine, alcohol, recreational drugs, sedating medication, or any medication differently than usual.
- If you have a medical condition or physical limitation that may affect deep breathing or flashing-light activation procedures.
- If you have scalp wounds, recent head surgery, skin irritation, hair extensions, a hairpiece, or another issue that may affect electrode placement.

## After the EEG

The electrodes and most of the conductive paste will be removed after the recording. A small amount of residue may remain in the hair and can be washed out with shampoo at home. The EEG technologist does not provide the final interpretation during the appointment. The recording is reviewed by the interpreting certified Neurologist, and the report is sent back to the referring physician's office.