

# ELECTROENCEPHALOGRAM (EEG) INSTRUCTIONS

## To prepare for an EEG:

- Wash your hair the night before or the day of the test, but don't use any conditioners, hair creams, sprays or styling gels.
- Avoid anything with caffeine six hours before the test.
- Take your usual medications unless instructed otherwise.

If you're supposed to sleep during your EEG test, your doctor may ask you to sleep less or even avoid sleep entirely the night before your EEG. If you have trouble falling asleep for the test, you might be given a sedative to help you relax

## What to Expect

You'll feel little or no discomfort during an EEG. The electrodes don't transmit any sensations. They just record your brain waves. If you need to sleep during the EEG, you might be given a sedative beforehand to help you relax. During the test:

- **A technician measures your head and marks your scalp** with a type of pencil, to indicate where to attach the electrodes. Those spots on your scalp may be scrubbed with a gritty cream to improve the quality of the recording.
- **A technician attaches flat metal discs (electrodes) to your scalp** using a special adhesive. The electrodes are connected with wires to an instrument that amplifies — makes bigger — the brain waves and records them on computer equipment. Some people wear an elastic cap fitted with electrodes, instead of having the adhesive applied to their scalps. Once the electrodes are in place, an EEG typically takes 30 to 60 minutes.
- **You relax in a comfortable position with your eyes closed during the test.** At various times, the technician may ask you to open and close your eyes, perform a few simple calculations, read a paragraph, look at a picture, breathe deeply (hyperventilate) for a few minutes, or look at a flashing light.

## After the test

After the test, the technician removes the electrodes or cap. If no sedative was given, you should feel no side effects after the procedure, and you can return to your normal routine.

If you used a sedative, it may take about an hour to partially recover from the medication. You'll need someone to take you home because it can take up to a day for the full effects of the sedative to wear off. Rest and don't drive for the remainder of the day.