

# EEG Tests

## At Seattle Children's and Seattle Children's Everett

An EEG is a painless recording of the brain's electrical activity.

Your child's doctor has requested an EEG (electroencephalogram).

Your appointment is on (date): \_\_\_\_\_ at (time): \_\_\_\_\_  
at this location:

Seattle Children's       Children's Everett

Please arrive to register at \_\_\_\_\_  
(30 minutes prior to your appointment time).



### Where is the EEG lab?

The appointment will be at 1 of 2 places: Seattle Children's Hospital or Children's Everett.

If your child's appointment is at Seattle Children's, please enter through the Whale entrance on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor to register. The greeters at the entrance will show you how to get to the EEG lab on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor, Room B-5552.

If your child's appointment is at the Everett Clinic, please follow the enclosed driving directions to Children's Everett (see "Clinic Visit Basics – Everett").

### What is an EEG?

An EEG is a painless recording of the brain's electrical activity. Small gold cups, called electrodes, will be used to test your child's brain function.

### **How are the electrodes put on my child?**

The person who will do the test is called the “EEG technologist,” or “EEG tech.” The EEG tech measures and marks with a red crayon 30 spots on your child’s head. This is done through your child’s hair. Your child’s hair *does not* need to be cut or shaved. The marks are where the 30 electrodes will be attached with glue or paste. The parts of your child’s head where the electrodes go need to be very clean to get the best recording possible. The EEG tech will rub a sandy cleanser on the places where the electrodes will attach before putting them on.

It takes up to 30 minutes to put all the electrodes on. Your child’s head and body need to be totally still for the whole procedure.

You may be asked to hold your child’s cheeks to hold their head still. If your child still moves too much, their arms may be wrapped snugly so that the process can go as quickly and easily as possible.

We know that children react differently to getting an EEG. We will attempt to meet your child’s needs.

### **What happens during the EEG?**

After the electrodes are in place, the EEG tech will start the recording and then test your child’s brain waves in a few different ways. These are the tests we may ask your child to do:

- Deep breathing for up to 5 minutes
- Checking response to flashing lights
- Counting and remembering things
- Opening and closing eyes
- Lying quietly and/or sleeping

The length of time it takes for your child’s EEG depends on what test your doctor has ordered. At the end of the recording, the EEG tech will take the electrodes off your child’s head with water or solvent. This does not hurt your child.

### **How do I get my child ready for the test?**

Before the appointment, please:

- Have your child sleep-deprived and allow no naps before the test. Follow the instructions on the next page for keeping your child awake.
- Have your child’s hair clean and dry. Please avoid styling products, oils or braids.
- Give medicines as scheduled, unless your child’s healthcare team gives you different directions.
- Let your child eat and drink before the test, but please have them avoid caffeine and sugar if possible.
- Take your child to the bathroom before the appointment time. (They will be in the room for over 1 hour.)
- Bring things that make your child feel comfortable, like a bottle, pacifier, blanket, toys or other items.

### To Learn More

- Seattle Children’s Neurology, 206-987-2078 or EEG Scheduling 206-987-2081
- Children’s Everett, 425-304-6080
- Ask your child’s healthcare provider
- [www.seattlechildrens.org](http://www.seattlechildrens.org)

### Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your child’s nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.
- For Deaf and hard of hearing callers 206-987-2280 (TTY)

- Please be on time. If you come late, we may need to reschedule.
- If you have other children, please arrange childcare ahead of time. Seattle Children’s does not have childcare, and other children are not allowed in the room during the test. One parent or caregiver must be in the room with the technologist, but no more people are allowed inside (except if you need an interpreter).

### When will I know the results of the EEG?

The EEG tech that performs the test cannot give you any information about the results of your child’s test.

The EEG is read by one of our pediatric neurologists, and the results are mailed to the doctor who referred your child for the study. Please call your child’s primary care provider in 7 to 10 days for the EEG results.

### Instructions for keeping your child awake

It is very important that your child be deprived of sleep before the test. This is because we need to see your child’s brain function during natural sleep. We do not use any sedation, and some tests require your child to be asleep during the EEG.

#### Age of child

#### Instructions for day of test

Less than 6 months	Child’s normal sleep schedule
6 months to 1½ years	Wake at 5 a.m. or 2 hours before normal waking time
1½ to 2½ years	Wake at 4 a.m. or 3 hours before normal waking time
2½ to 3½ years	Wake at 3:30 a.m. or 3½ hours before normal waking time
3½ to 6 years	Wake at 3 a.m. or 4 hours before normal waking time
6 years and over	Wake at 2 a.m. or 5 hours before normal waking time

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Seattle Children’s offers interpreter services for Deaf, hard of hearing or non-English speaking patients, family members and legal representatives free of charge. Seattle Children’s will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call the Family Resource Center at 206-987-2201.

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children’s. However, your child’s needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child’s healthcare provider.

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