



PATIENT
EDUCATION

Electroencephalogram

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AMERICAN UNIVERSITY of BEIRUT MEDICAL CENTER

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What is an electroencephalogram?

An electroencephalogram (EEG) is a test used to record the brain's electrical activity. A specialized technician will apply electrodes on your scalp to detect the brain's electrical signals that are displayed on a special computer screen.

Why would I need an EEG?

Your doctor might recommend doing an EEG to assist in the diagnosis of several neurological disorders such as epilepsy and dementia.

An EEG may also be recommended for patients who are in coma at the Medical Center.

How do I prepare for an EEG?

- On the night before the test, you may be asked to sleep two to three hours only to be able to sleep during the EEG recording time.
- Avoid eating or drinking products containing caffeine (such as coffee, tea, cola soft drinks, and chocolate) for eight hours before the test to be able to sleep during the EEG.
- Wash your hair with shampoo and water. Avoid using conditioners or any hair care products such as spray, gel, oil, hair cream, etc.
- Make sure to inform your doctor and technician about the medications you are taking.
- Do not come alone to the Medical Center. You will need someone to help you in preparing the papers, answering the doctor's questions, and taking you back home after the EEG.

What happens during an EEG?

- You will be asked to sit in a chair. Women should remove earrings and head covers.
- The technician will mark a number of spots on your head using a measuring tape and pen. He/she will clean these spots using a special solution to enhance the EEG recording. Then, he/she will apply electrodes on your scalp with a special paste.
- Once the EEG recording starts, you will be asked to lie still in bed and relax. Then, the technician will ask you to open and close your eyes for a few minutes, look at a flashing light, and hyperventilate (breathe deeply and more rapidly than usual) for three to five minutes.
- Then you may be asked to try to sleep. If you could not sleep spontaneously, the nurse will give you a sedative medication that helps you sleep.
- If you develop a seizure during the EEG, the technician is well-trained to properly manage the situation and keep you safe.
- When the test finishes, the technician will remove the electrodes from your scalp. Then, you can wash your head with warm water to remove the paste.
- The EEG is generally safe and not painful.



What happens after an EEG?

- If you did not receive a sedative medication, you can go home and resume your daily activities.
- If you received a sedative medication, someone will have to take you home. You should rest and avoid driving for at least six hours.
- Take an appointment with your doctor to discuss the test results.

For any questions or concerns, please visit the Epilepsy Monitoring Unit or call us on 01 - 350000 ext. 5541 or 6903. We are available Monday through Friday from 8:00 am till 5:00 pm. We are here to answer all your questions.

**This educational material provides general information only.
It does not constitute medical advice. Consult your health care provider to determine whether the information applies to you.**

