

# Preparing your child for an overnight EEG

An EEG (electroencephalogram) is a painless recording of the brain's electrical activity. Electrodes (leads) are placed on your child's head through their hair. Placing the leads can take up to 20 minutes. Once the leads are on securely, then the test starts and your child will be expected to stay in their room for the rest of the day and while they sleep overnight. The leads will be taken off once the EEG is done recording (this is determined by the amount of recording time your doctor requested).



You and your child will stay overnight in the hospital to complete this study. To help make your stay comfortable, we would like to share the following tips to help you prepare for your experience.

1. Your child will have EEG leads (long wires) placed on the scalp. The leads must stay in place for the entire study. Please talk with your child prior to the day of the EEG to help them understand what to expect. If you or your child are unfamiliar with this study and what to expect, you can look at our visual supports and resources on our website: <http://childrensnational.org/autismvisualresources>
2. For some children, the process of placing and securing the leads can be uncomfortable because they have to sit still. If you are worried that your child may not be able to sit still for 15-20 minutes during the lead placement or that your child may not be able to keep the leads on, please call 202-476-8939 and ask to speak with a Child Life Specialist. Child Life Specialists assist with planning support that works for your child.
3. You may want to dress your child in a button or zip shirt/pajamas so that the clothing can easily be removed or changed after the leads have been placed.
4. During the study, your child will need to stay in their room and not be too active. Please bring favorite snacks, comfort items, electronic device, crafts, sensory toys, or games for play and entertainment.
5. An adult must be with your child at all times. Bring comfortable clothing, overnight necessities, work laptops, and snacks for yourself.
6. Two adults are able to stay overnight. We offer one parent bed and a sleeper recliner. Siblings and other family are permitted and encouraged to visit during the day until 8pm.
7. There is Wi-Fi, internet, and TV in all of the rooms. Gaming systems may be available upon request.

If your child has autism or other communication, behavior, or sensory needs, please e-mail [ABCconsultteam@childrensnational.org](mailto:ABCconsultteam@childrensnational.org) or call us at 202-476-2884 for additional assistance.

We will work as a team to ensure your child is cared for throughout the entire process. If you feel your child may have difficulties with any portion of the EEG study (preparation for hospital stay, lead placement, cooperation, interaction with staff), please contact our Child Life Specialist team at 202-476-8939.

The video EEG scheduler will call you to make the appointment (202-476-5645, then press 5).