

Melatonin for your child's Sleep EEG

What is a Melatonin Sleep EEG test? It is a recording of the natural electrical activity of the brain taken after giving Melatonin to encourage your child to sleep. Your child may have been unwilling to have the test while awake. Also, recording when asleep may give information not previously seen when awake. Melatonin is a naturally occurring hormone (chemical messenger) found deep inside the brain and is thought to be important in the production of sleep. We use a manmade version that comes as a tablet or capsule. The dose is calculated for your child to induce sleep and is not associated with excessive sleepiness on waking.

What should we do beforehand?

- Keep your child up as late as you can the night before and wake him/her up very early on the day of the EEG
- Wash and dry your child's hair, keep it free from all hair products such as gel, oils or spray
- Please **do not stop** any prescribed medication, unless you have been specifically told to do so
- Meals should be taken as usual; your child should not arrive hungry. Avoid caffeine drinks
- Bring a favourite bed-time comforter and/or bottle if you like

Where do we go when we arrive? Please go straight to Kingfisher Ward where the test will take place.

How is Melatonin given? A nurse will take written consent from a parent or legal guardian for the melatonin to be given. It is usually swallowed with a drink or stirred into a favourite yogurt if this is easier. It usually takes about 20-60 minutes to work. If necessary a top-up dose may be given later.

How do you encourage sleep? We try to ensure a quiet, peaceful environment. A baby or young child may like to cuddle on an adult's lap or lie on a bed if they prefer. We will darken the room and wait until your child is asleep or drowsy before the EEG test begins.

What happens during the test? When your child has gone to sleep or is very drowsy, we may measure the head, and gently apply up to 22 wires to the scalp using a water-soluble paste; there is only a little gentle rubbing. Then, a computer records the brainwave activity for about 20 to 30 minutes and a video also records the test. Afterwards the wires are removed and you can tidy your child's hair. The paste washes out easily afterwards.

Why do you record a video? Digital video is recorded for technical reasons and to aid interpretation. Only sections that aid interpretation are kept. You will be asked for your consent for us to record the video.

How long will the test take? Please allow at least three hours at the hospital. It is impossible to be exact as all children are different and it depends upon how long it takes your child to settle to sleep. Once we start the EEG it usually takes about an hour.

What happens if my child does not sleep? We always strive to achieve the best result we can for each child. However, occasionally, a child does not sleep and we cannot obtain a recording so we will write and tell the referring doctor.

Are there any side effects? There are no side effects from recording an EEG; however occasionally children are tired afterwards from the melatonin. If you have any concerns after the test you should seek advice from your doctor.

When will we get the results? Results are sent to the doctor who requested the test. This usually takes one to three weeks.

Please phone if you have any further questions 01305 255255