My Texas Children’s Journey
What to Expect at Your EEG at Texas Children’s

A Social Story to Prepare Patients and Families for Visits
Before the Visit

- Discuss what will happen during the visit by using words and pictures your child can understand.
- Avoid focusing on the unpleasant parts of the visit as this may cause everyone to feel more anxious.
- Create an EEG Plan. This involves considering what you will bring to the visit to help your child communicate and feel comfortable. This might include a stuffed animal, pacifier, bottle, or noise machine. It might be helpful to bring some rewards for your child for being brave and following instructions during their EEG. It might also involve thinking about what to share with the medical staff for the visit to go as smoothly as possible.
- Sleep deprive your child the night before. It is really important for you to limit your child's sleep the night before your appointment in order for them to easily fall asleep during the visit.
- Bring layers. Your child will not be able to sleep with a blanket during the visit, but they can wear layers of clothing.
- Bring and use visual supports. Your child may benefit from reading a Social Story or seeing a list of all the steps involved in an EEG.
- Request Child Life. Child life specialists are available to help prepare children, teenagers, and young adults for medical treatments and procedures. To request a child life specialist, please make your request when checking-in to the clinic or at least 48 business hours in advance via phone or email: 832-826-1650 or childlife@texaschildrens.org.
During the Visit

- **Share your suggestions** with medical staff.
- **Remain calm and reassuring.** Controlling your expressions and emotions will help your child do the same.
- **Turn off your phone** and be an active participant.
- Allow your child to have a **stuffed animal, pacifiers and bottles**, but eating is **not** allowed.
- **Use simple, direct language** to explain what is happening. For example, you could say, "You're getting an EEG. The doctors will take a video of your brain to learn more about it."
- **Acknowledge feelings** but avoid long conversations and avoid using words like “scared” or “worried.”
- Help your child see medical **staff as helpers**.
- When possible, **provide choices** to help your child feel more in control. For example, let your child pick what show they would like to watch or what book to read to them.
- **Praise your child’s** brave behavior and ability to complete the visit.
A note for parents/caregivers:

Some children and teenagers benefit from having a written or picture-based guide for situations that are new or not part of their regular routine. A Social Story can be a helpful tool to provide a reasonable overview about an upcoming situation or event so that children and teenagers know what to expect. Some families may find it helpful to read the story with their child a few days prior to the visit. Others may find it more helpful to read it the morning of the visit or on the way to the visit.

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Today I am going to Texas Children’s to have an EEG. This means my doctors are going to take a video of my brain to learn more about it.
I might get dropped off, someone might help my family park our car, or we may drive under the building to park our car ourselves.
Inside the hospital, I go to the **welcome desk** to make sure we know where to go.
I will ride the elevator to get to the 21st Floor.
I visit the front desk to check-in for my appointment.
I now have to wait for someone to call my name. The waiting area can be busy and a bit noisy. I should stay by my family.

Waiting can be really hard. That’s why I brought some of my favorite things!
They called my name! I now walk to my room with my technologist or “tech” for short. The tech is the person that is trained to check my brain. They are super nice and good at their job.
Before I get to my room, I should let the tech know if I need to use the bathroom. I will be asked to lay down for a little bit so going to the bathroom is a good idea!
When I enter my room, there will be a big bed for me to sleep on while I am at the hospital. The bed may feel different than my bed at home but I can bring a stuffed animal from home to make me feel more comfortable.
In my room, I will have my own TV where I can watch movies and TV shows. I can also bring my tablet.
There will also be a couch in the room for one of my family members to sleep on while we are at the hospital. My family will be with me the whole time!
Once I’m in my room, the tech will bring in a tray with tape, glue, Q-tips, and wires. They might put pieces of tape along the counter so they are ready to go!
It's time to lay down!

After I lay down, the tech will stand behind my bed.
The tech will first measure my head by using measuring tape and making marks on my head.

It might tickle a little bit!
At first it might feel sticky, then it might feel a little rough like sandpaper. The purpose of this cleaning is to make sure they get a good view of my brain!

The tech will then clean the spots on my head where they will attach the wires.
After this, the tech will **apply a thick cream** to each spot they just cleaned to help the wires stick to my body. The cream will be thick **like toothpaste**.

The tech will have to **move pieces** of my **hair** apart to apply the cream. **It might tickle** but it will **not hurt**!
Once the cream is applied, the tech will attach the wires. Most wires will go on my head but a couple will go on my ear lobe and below my neck. They need to apply about 25 wires total!

They might also use a piece of cotton on the wires to help them stick.
While I wait for the tech to finish, I can watch TV. There may also be another person in the room called a Child Life Specialist who will help me feel brave while I lay down.

This process can take a while! I need to be very still and lay down the whole time.
Now, it's time to **turn off** the lights. My family can talk to me, sing to me, or even turn on my sound machine.
The tech then leaves the room to go to the control room. They can still hear me and see me from the control room.
The tech may ask me to breathe fast and deep. They may even give me a pinwheel or bubbles to remind me to blow!

This helps them get a good view of my brain.
The tech will also **shine** a lamp in my face for about **2 to 3 minutes**.

It's **super bright** and flashes!

Even though it’s bright, it’s **important** for me to **pay close attention**.
Now it's **important** for me to **close my eyes** and try to go to **sleep**.
After sleeping for about 30 to 45 minutes, it's time to wake up!
The tech will return to the room and use warm water and a wash cloth to remove each wire. It will feel warm but does not hurt at all.

The procedure is over!
I stayed with my family!
I stayed in bed!

I stayed in my room!
Everyone is so proud of me!
It’s time to leave!

I say goodbye to everyone!
Please complete a brief survey to let us know about your experience using this social story!

Or visit https://redcap.link/TCHsocialstory

Once you finish the survey, please continue clicking for additional resources
Tools to Help Your Child Prepare for an EEG
Your child may already be familiar with using a visual schedule at school or even at home. A visual schedule can help prepare children for new or unfamiliar situations, such as an EEG. Visual schedules can be a checklist going down a page or even a sequence of pictures, like the one below.
A First-Then board provides a visual for the child that once they participate in a non-preferred task, such as an EEG, they will be able to engage in a more preferred task afterwards, such as playing with their teddy bear. During an EEG, a First-Then board can help motivate your child to take part in an activity that is not enjoyable by clarifying that a preferred activity will occur after it is over.
Distraction/Relaxation Techniques:

• When children think about going to the doctor, they may become worried about the visit. You can help by teaching your child simple relaxation techniques. Distraction may help by taking your child’s mind off stressful events, thoughts, or emotions and putting attention on positive thoughts or activities.

• Techniques include:

  • **Deep breathing**: Teach your child to take a deep breath, hold the breath for a few seconds and then release it. For young children, using a pinwheel or bubbles to practice can help them focus on their breathing and distract from their stress.

  • **Muscle tensing/relaxing**: Have your child relax by focusing on different muscles of the body and tensing and relaxing them one at a time.

  • **Visualization**: Encourage your child to imagine something pleasant and to visualize that scene with eyes closed. Suggest thinking about smells, sounds, and touch of what is imagined. Using pictures or objects to remind your child of favorite places or activities can help this strategy be more successful.

  • **Favorite toys/activities/books**: Involve your child in distracting activities before the procedure begins and, if possible, before your child begins to become upset. Use a favorite toy, a particularly engaging topic of conversation, or a game that does not require movement.
Practice to Help Prepare for Visit

• Practicing medical procedures in familiar places, such as home or school, help children understand what to expect and help promote cooperation.

• Families are encouraged to pretend to give a stuffed animal or doll an EEG. Families should have their child pick a comfort item, distraction technique, or play item to practice with the doll or animal.

• Once the family is done pretending to give an EEG, the child should choose a reward such as a sticker or special activity to complete after the EEG is over.
My EEG Plan

Think about everything you need to help you have a successful EEG. Make a plan ahead of time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To help prepare me for the visit, I will:</th>
<th>To help me communicate during the visit, I will:</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>____________________________________________________________________________</td>
<td>____________________________________________________________________________</td>
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<tr>
<th>To help me feel comfortable during the visit, I will bring my:</th>
<th>Before the EEG, I will tell the tech:</th>
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<td>_________________________________________________________</td>
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<th>During the EEG, I can:</th>
<th>When the EEG is over, I can:</th>
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