

## What To Expect From Your Epilepsy Monitoring Unit Admission

### Providence Epilepsy Center

#### What is video-EEG Telemetry?

A standard electroencephalogram (EEG) takes less than an hour to do. It can only record a “snapshot” of your brain’s activity. If you do not have a seizure during this test, your doctor may not have enough information to make a diagnosis.

A seizure occurs when your brain cells become overly excited electrically. This electrical energy can spread to other brain cells. The part of your brain that is affected will not work like it should. Your physical behaviors right before, during, and after your seizure give clues about where your seizure starts and what type of seizure it is. The neurologist will use a video camera and EEG at the same time to record what your seizure looks like. This test requires an admission to the hospital.

#### What will my room look like?

You will be admitted to a private room. There is a recliner chair that turns into a bed. The video camera is located on the ceiling across from the bed. There is also a microphone in the room. Next to the video camera is an infrared light. This improves the video quality when the room is dark. You will be given a button to push when you have a seizure.

#### Admission to the EMU

Your insurance company needs to approve your hospitalization.

You have been scheduled for an EMU admission:

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

- Providence Portland Medical Center**  
4805 NE Glisan St., Portland, OR 97213  
OR
- Providence St. Vincent Medical Center**  
9205 SW Barnes Rd, Portland, OR 97225

On the morning of admission, please

- Shower, but do not use conditioner or gel.
- Eat breakfast.
- Take your morning medications prior to coming to the hospital.

Check in at the admitting desk. They will escort you to the appropriate room. Once in the EMU, you will meet your nurse. The EEG technologist will come and glue small metal discs to your scalp. Once you are connected to the EEG, you will see flashing lights and will be asked to breathe hard and fast. Your head will be wrapped with gauze. The EEG wires from your head will connect into a small shoulder pack. You will also have an IV placed.

#### Members of the EMU Team

- The *Neurologist* will read your EEG, order your medications, and develop a treatment plan to manage your seizures.
- The *EMU Nurse Coordinator* will organize your admission, support the EMU nurse, and provide education.
- The *EEG Technologist* will connect you to the EEG, edit the EEG, and make sure that the recordings are good quality.
- The *EMU Nurse* will give you medications, perform assessments, and help keep you safe during a seizure.
- The *Neuropsychologist* will test how well different parts of your brain is functioning and rule out other possible causes for seizures.

#### Helping you to have a seizure

You or a family member may be able to identify things that bring on a seizure. Common triggers are stress, lack of sleep, missing medications, infections, and flashing lights. To reduce the time you are in the hospital, your anti-seizure medications may be stopped or asked to stay awake for a long time.

## What happens if I have a seizure?

Coming into the hospital and having a seizure can feel scary. If you have been asked to have this test, then you are already having enough seizures to disrupt your life. It is necessary for your doctor to see more than one seizure to help confirm your diagnosis.

We ask that a family member stay with you during your admission to help identify your seizures. You will be given an event button that you or your family member will push if you feel like you are about to have a seizure. This button marks the EEG and notifies the nurses. During a seizure, an EMU nurse will check to make sure that you are safe. Once they know that you are safe, they will ask you questions and have you perform some small tasks.

Emergency medications are ordered if you have a long seizure or frequent seizures in a certain time period.

## Patient Expectations

You can help us by staying “on camera” as much as possible.

You are at risk for injury during a seizure. To keep you safe, we have the following rules:

- A nurse or nursing assistant will need to be present whenever you are out of bed. Especially when you are off camera.
- *Seizure pads.* All four of your side rails will be up and they will be covered with seizure pads.
- *Bed alarm.* A bed alarm will be placed on your bed that will alert the nurses if you get up without assistance.
- *No smoking.* We can provide a nicotine patch if you let us know.
- *Bathing.* You will not be able to shower while connected to the video-EEG. Your nurse or nursing assistant will help you wash up at the sink or in the bathroom (off camera).
- *Clothing.* You may wear your own clothes. We suggest simple and comfortable clothes such as sweat pants or pajama bottoms and a shirt that opens in the front. You will not be able to pull it over your head.

- *No gum chewing.* Gum chewing or sucking motions can hide the electrical activity. Chewing during meal times is not a problem because it is for a short amount of time.

## Activities to keep busy

You will be spending most of your time in bed waiting for a seizure. This can be boring. You are encouraged to bring books, games, or puzzles to help pass the time. Cable TV is available in each of the rooms. Sometimes the nurses can order a DVD or VCR player from the library. If you bring electronic devices, the EEG technologists will need to check to make sure that they do not interfere with the EEG.

- You may bring a game boy.
- Laptops may be used on battery power only. They must be closed when charging.
- I-Pods may be used if you have a stereo only.
- Cell phones are not allowed. You are welcome to use the phone in the room.

## Planning your stay

Video-EEG monitoring usually takes 3 to 5 days. We cannot tell you how long it will take. It needs to be long enough to “capture” more than one of your typical seizures. We need to be sure that each event is the same. If they are not, we need to be able to tell the difference between your seizures. Typically, we admit patients on Mondays and aim for discharge on Friday if possible. Each day the EMU team will meet with you to come up with an action plan for the next day.

## What to bring to the EMU

Please bring the following items:

- Updated medication list
- Recent seizure calendar & description of seizures
- Comfortable clothing
- Activities to keep busy

If you have questions, please call the EMU Nurse Coordinator at **503-216-1035**.