Epilepsy Long-Term Monitoring

NeuroCare Brain and Spine Center

The Epilepsy Monitoring and Surgery Program is staffed by a team of experts. They work together to treat people with epilepsy whose seizures are not controlled, even with medical treatment. This kind of program has helped many epilepsy patients have fewer seizures or become seizure free.

What long-term epilepsy monitoring means
Long-term epilepsy monitoring (LTEM) involves the use of video and electroencephalography (EEG). These are used to record a person’s behavior and brainwaves during a hospital stay. The video-EEG monitoring gives us complete information about what happens during a person’s seizures.

Why long-term monitoring is needed
Long-term epilepsy monitoring:
• Can confirm that a person has epilepsy. In most epilepsy centers, about 1 in 4 patients who have seizure-like events that do not respond to medication do not have epilepsy.
• Can confirm what type of seizures you have. Many medications are made to treat certain types of seizures.
• Can help find out where in the brain your seizures begin. This is key for the surgical treatment of epilepsy. Seizures are videotaped because behavior during seizures can also help show this.
• Can tell how often seizures occur. Often patients have seizures and do not know unless someone tells them.
• Can help find out if surgery is a treatment option for you. Only two-thirds of epilepsy patients get good seizure control with medications. In some patients, surgery can help control seizures or even cure epilepsy for those who do not get good seizure control with medications.

Getting ready for your hospital stay
Please be sure your hair is clean when you come to the hospital. Do not apply hairspray, grease, styling gel, mousse, or other hair care products.

Please bring these items with you:
• Toothbrush, toothpaste, or denture care items
• Deodorant
• Other personal care items
• Books, video games, music players, or other personal items for your entertainment

You may wear your own pajamas or loungewear while in the hospital.
• Please be sure that your shirts button or zip down the front instead of pulling over the head.
• When choosing what to wear, remember that video monitoring continues even while you are asleep.
• Hospital gowns are available.

We will obtain precertification for your hospital stay. Please contact your insurance carrier to verify your benefits before your hospital stay. They can tell you what will be covered and what payments you can expect to be billed for.

Your neurology team will follow you daily in the hospital. You may also see your family doctor or other doctors to address any medical problems if needed. If you have any concerns about this, please call your doctor or __________________________.

Seizure medications will be reduced or stopped during your hospital stay. Take your medications as directed on the morning you come to the hospital.
On the day you come to the hospital
Please check in at the Inpatient Admitting desk. You will be brought to a private room (with your own bathroom). Your nurse will ask you questions about your medical history and your seizures.

An intravenous (IV) will be started as a route to give you any medications you may need. It will be “capped” whenever you are not receiving fluids or medication through it.

A few things to know about your stay
• If the hospital is smoke-free, your doctor can prescribe a nicotine patch if needed. Please let us know if you would like one during your stay.
• If you wish to have someone stay with you in the hospital, we can house only one extra person in your room. Please tell your nurse if someone will be staying overnight with you.
• We offer hotel suites in the building for others who may want to stay. These rooms are given out on a first-come/first-served basis. Please tell us if you would like to know more about this service.
• Social workers are available to discuss any social needs you may have.
• We allow visitors 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week. They may bring food or snacks for you.
• Staff members from the Utilization Review Department may visit you during your stay. This team helps to keep your insurance company informed about the plan of care.

We will use ways to bring on a seizure during your hospital stay. These include decreasing or stopping your seizure medications and deep breathing exercises. Other ways might include sleep deprivation and flashing lights. If you know of anything that triggers your seizures, please tell your doctor.

During your hospital stay
These steps must be followed for your safety:
• You must either remain in bed or be up in the chair. When you are out of bed at any time you must wear a soft helmet that we will give you.
• A nurse must be present in your room when you need to use the bathroom, move from the bed to the chair, or move from the chair to the bed.
• All four side rails with padding need to be pulled up when you are in bed.

When a seizure occurs . . .
• The technician watching you at all times will tell your nurse, who will respond quickly.
• If you can, you will be asked to read a simple sign and answer simple questions.
• Suction and oxygen are in your room if you should need them during a seizure.

You will probably be monitored until you have had three seizures. Most patients have these within three to five days. Once these seizures are recorded you will be put back on seizure medication before you are sent home. Your doctor may decide to try a new medication for your seizures. If you wish to see your seizure video, please tell your doctor.

EEG patches cannot get wet, so you will not be able to shower while you have them on. You can wash up at the sink. On the fifth day, if you have not had three seizures, the patches will be removed for a short while so you can wash your hair.

Your doctor will discuss your test results and treatment options with you before you go home.

My check-in time is ____________________

Questions or special requests? Please call your doctor.

The information presented is intended for general information and educational purposes. It is not intended to replace the advice of your health care provider. Contact your health care provider if you believe you have a health problem.