

Patient information

Visual Electrodiagnostic Testing (EDT)

St Pauls Eye Unit

This information sheet gives you a brief description of visual electrodiagnostic testing and what to expect when you attend for your appointment.

What is visual electrodiagnostic tests?

There are three main tests:

- A visual evoked potential **(VEP)** to check the nerve connection from the eye to the brain.
- An electroretinogram **(ERG)** and an electro-oculogram **(EOG)** to check the function of the retina (the retina is the 'photographic layer' at the back of the eye).

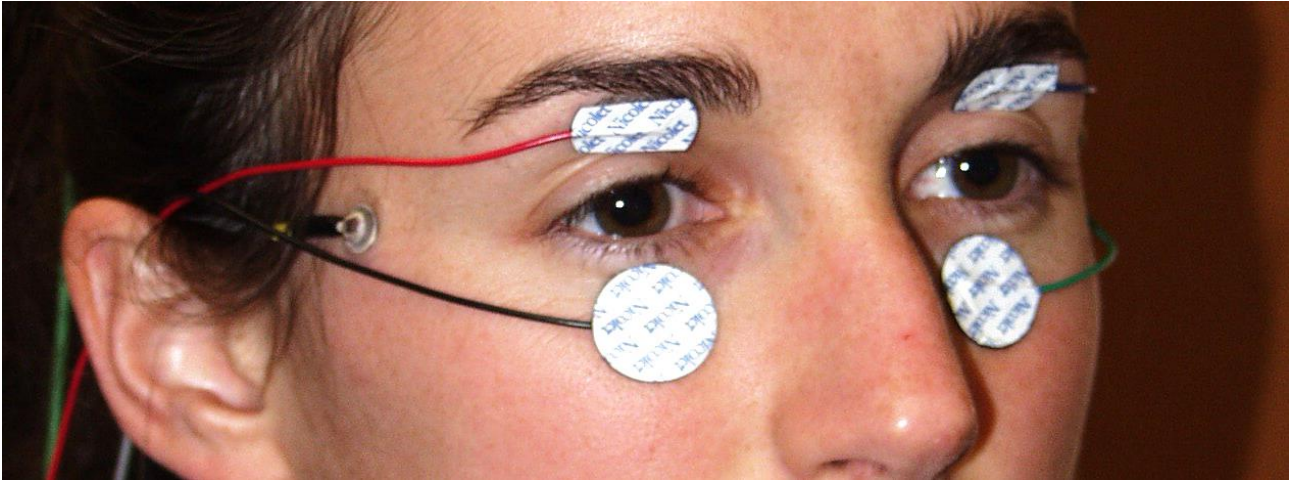
These tests will have been requested by your eye specialist to help answer questions about your vision.

Why are these tests performed?

The retina, optic nerve and parts of the brain concerned with vision, create small electrical impulses when looking at something. Our tests can provide valuable information about the function of your visual system.

What do these tests involve?

The tests are not painful. Sensors will be placed on the surface of your head and near your eyes (see picture; the actual positions will vary according to the test).



These sensors pick up electrical potentials made by you. They will not be putting any electricity into you.

With the sensors attached, you will watch a series of flashes or patterns shown on a TV screen, sometimes with one eye at a time. Some tests will take place in the dark.

It may be necessary to dilate (enlarge) your pupils using eye-drops which may sting for a few seconds after being applied, and your vision is likely to be a little blurred for a few hours.

How long will these tests take?

Depending on how many tests we need to perform, these tests will take from between 45 minutes to 90 minutes. If you want a chaperone let us know.

What should I do before the tests?

- Take your usual medication as normal unless advised otherwise.
- Eat and drink as normal.
- Bring your glasses with you.
- As we will be sticking sensors on your face, you may wish to leave off makeup, if you use it.

Leave your hair in a loose style as we may attach some sensors to your scalp.

Are there any risks?

There is a very low risk of a minor corneal abrasion if corneal electrodes are used. This is a little like a small scratch and may cause discomfort.

Most people may experience a slight gritty sensation in the eye after electrode use. If you experience pain, please see your family doctor (GP) or local eye doctor this should occur in less than 1:10,000 cases.

There may be transient stinging and blurring of vision after the administration of eye drops.

If you should experience any side effects after the tests which you think might be caused by the drops or tests, then please contact your GP or optometrist. If they cannot help, please contact:

St Paul's Eye Unit – Primary Care

Tel: 0151 706 3953/3949.

Text phone Number: 18001 0151 706 3953/3949

If you have epilepsy or are photosensitive, please let us know so we can adapt the tests to take account of this.

If you are worried about any of these risks, please speak to your consultant or a member of their team.

Are there any alternative ways of obtaining this information?

At present there are no other methods for obtaining this information about your vision.

What will happen if I do not have these tests?

Your eye specialist has referred you for these tests as there are some unanswered questions regarding your vision.

If you choose not to have these tests, then he or she will not have a complete picture of your medical condition, and it will be harder to make a diagnosis. This may delay any treatment that you need.

Where are these tests performed?

The EDT test room is located within the main St Pauls Outpatient department at the Royal Liverpool University Hospital on the Lower Ground Floor.

If you find yourself lost, ask any member of the hospital staff to call extension 4218 and say you have an appointment for EDT tests.

A map showing how to get to the hospital is provided separately.

What will happen after the tests?

These tests will be analysed after you leave, and the results will be sent to your eye specialist who will then make an appointment with you to discuss the results.

We will not be able to give you any information on the results of the tests.

You will be able to leave and go home or return to work.

We are an opt in trust so if you don't want Doctors to learn from your anonymised results let us know in person or via the trusts opt out webpage.

If you have received the drops to dilate your pupils, your vision will be blurred for a few hours, and you will be more sensitive to light (a pair of sunglasses might help).

Do not drive, perform complex or dangerous tasks until your vision returns to normal.

Please let us know if you are taking monoamine oxidase inhibitors (e.g., phenelzine, isocarboxazid) or have uncontrolled hypertension as you should not receive eye drops.

You may wish to bring someone with you to drive you home, but walking and travelling on public transport should not be a problem.

Important message

Please confirm whether you will or will not be attending.

If you are unable to attend, it is essential to let us know as early as possible so that your appointment can be given to someone else.

Feedback

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your Outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

Further information

If you have any further questions, please contact:

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St Pauls Eye Unit

Royal Liverpool University Hospital

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Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 4225

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All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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