

## What to Expect in the Epilepsy Monitoring Unit

A complete workup may include advanced imaging and other tests.

The EEG leads are attached to you with a special type of adhesive paste—it can't get wet. *You can remove the gel with shampoo and conditioner once you are discharged.*

It is important that you do not pull the electrodes off. If you anticipate that this is likely to occur, please notify the nurse and technician.

While monitoring may feel awkward at first, the process can help to provide the information needed to determine your treatment options.

The EEG will show the brain's activity during that particular recording period. Monitoring may take from 2 to 3 days, and nights, in the hospital.

Your provider will determine how long you need to be monitored. The exact length of time varies for each patient.

Ongoing monitoring will be provided by a healthcare team that specializes in seizures. The EMU care team will meet with you daily to provide updates regarding monitoring and next steps.

### The recording has three parts:



#### Video

A camera will record all your physical activity while your brain waves are being recorded on the EEG. By videotaping the seizures or events, we can see exactly what happens before, during, and after an event. This gives us a more accurate picture of the events. If you notice any suspicious events, you can speak directly into the camera as the room is always being recorded.



#### EEG Recording

You will have a continuous EEG recording. This will allow us to detect any seizure activity that occurs, even if you are unaware that it is happening. The EEG helps us determine in which portion of the brain the seizures begin, and gives us information about your brain wave activity between events. It also will help us decide if the events are epileptic in nature.



#### Audio

Please be aware that there are microphones in the room to help us fully capture exactly what happens during an event.

### Triggering Seizures

The EMU care team may use tactics to trigger seizures in a controlled and safe environment to help determine where seizures are coming from. These tactics may include:

- Reducing or stopping medication. *This guidance will come from your provider. Please do not stop medications, or give medications, unless instructed by your provider.*
- Encouraging exercise
- Flashing lights
- Sleep interruption
- Requiring heavy breathing

As odd as it sounds, engaging in stressful activities – including work – may be a good thing in the EMU. Stress may trigger seizures, which can help your provider get the information they need in a more timely fashion.

### Notifying the Team of Seizures

A button at the bedside can be used to let your healthcare team know when you feel a seizure is about to happen. If you think you may have a feeling of a seizure, it is always better to press the button, even if you are unsure. If you are unable to press the button before a seizure occurs, the video and monitoring nurse will help alert your healthcare team of the seizure.

Your caregiver can help by pressing a button if they see that a seizure or event is about to occur and if you are unable to press the button on your own.

### Medication

Please bring all of your current medications in their original bottles.

Do not take any medications during the admission process or while in the hospital for monitoring, as all medications will be given by the care team.

We will ensure that you know when you should take your medication after discharge and will help you understand any potential side effects.

Please make sure to inform your primary care doctor of any changes or new medicines. If you have any questions or concerns ask your nurse to review them with you again.

For your convenience, medications prescribed at discharge can be filled by Walgreens Pharmacy and delivered to you at your bedside before you leave the hospital. Walgreens is in the Ambulatory Care Pavilion on the lobby level of Westchester Medical Center. The phone number is 914.846.0848.

## After Your Stay in the Epilepsy Monitoring Unit

We will talk to you about your test results before you go home. We also will tell you if we think you will need any more tests or need to see any other providers. You will be given a printout of the results and when you come back to the office, we will send a follow-up note to your primary care provider. Make sure to schedule a follow-up appointment with your provider so they can review the test results and check your medications and progress.

## Preparing for Your Stay in the Epilepsy Monitoring Unit

If applicable, shampoo your hair the night before or the morning of admission; there is no need to cut your hair or undo braids.

We recommend eating breakfast or lunch before arrival.

One designated support person over the age of 18 may remain with you during your stay.

During the pandemic certain restrictions may be in place. Please talk to your provider regarding any restrictions.

### Please bring the following items:

- A calendar noting your most recent seizure or events
- All of your medications in their original bottles, and a complete list
- Personal care items
- Pajamas or comfortable clothing, with a top that buttons down in the front
- Special foods and notify the medical team of any dietary requirements
- Meals can also be provided for your designated support person.

## Arriving at Westchester Medical Center

**Parking** Parking for Westchester Medical Center is located at:  
100 Woods Road, Parking Lot #2  
Valhalla, NY 10595

**Admitting** You will be directed to the Admitting Office which is located in the main lobby.

## Contact Us

Our team is always eager to listen to and learn from our patients. If there is anything we can do to make your stay more comfortable, please let a member of your care team know. Our number is 914.493.5123

Thank you for entrusting us with your care.

## Additional Resources

Boston Children's Health Physicians of NY and CT—search "specialties" then "neurology" for articles and links

Westchester Medical Center

American Epilepsy Society

Anita Kaufman Foundation

Dravet Syndrome Epilepsy Foundation

Epilepsy Advocate

Lennox Gastaut Foundation

National Association of Epilepsy Centers

Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance

You Tube – Howcast- epilepsy



**Westchester Medical Center**

Westchester Medical Center Health Network

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100 Woods Road,  
Valhalla, NY 10595

**WMCHealth.org**

# WMCHealth Epilepsy Monitoring Unit

## Prepare For Diagnostic Testing



**Westchester Medical Center**

Westchester Medical Center Health Network

## WMCHealth Epilepsy Monitoring Unit

Having seizures is frightening and difficult, especially if you are unsure when the next one is going to happen. There are ways to determine what is causing them.

Your provider may recommend an evaluation in the WMCHealth Epilepsy Monitoring Unit (EMU). The EMU provides highly specialized, continuous video and electroencephalogram (EEG) monitoring at Westchester Medical Center. The EEG gives your provider an understanding of what is happening in the brain. Video EEG captures what is happening before, during, and after a seizure.

Throughout the testing process, our experienced healthcare team seeks to find out if your events are epileptic in nature. Our specialists have advanced training in EEG interpretation and epilepsy treatment. They will provide a comprehensive, expert evaluation of your event to determine whether you are having a seizure or another disorder.