

Nebraska Pulmonary Specialties

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SLEEP STUDY INFORMATION SHEET

1. What is a polysomnogram?

A polysomnogram is a test which measures bodily functions during sleep. Each test will vary depending on the individual case, and some of the measurements taken may include:

- Brain Waves (skin, surface electrodes on the head)
- Heart Beats (skin, surface electrodes on the chest)
- Eye Movements (skin, surface electrodes above and below the eyes)
- Muscle Tension (skin, surface electrodes on the chin)
- Leg Movements (skin, surface electrodes on the lower leg)
- Breathing (sensors attached to the skin near the nose or mouth)
- Blood Oxygen Levels (small sensor attached to the ear or finger, and not taken from the actual blood samples)

2. Why record all of these things?

During sleep, the body functions differently than while awake. Disrupted sleep can disturb daytime activities, and sometimes medical problems during sleep involve a risk to general health.

3. How can I sleep with all of these things on me?

Surprisingly, most people sleep very well. The body sensors are applied so that you can turn and move during your sleep. Generally, you will not be aware that you are wearing the devices after they have been on for a short time. The staff tries to make the environment as comfortable and similar as possible to your home surroundings and many patients report that they actually sleep better than at home. Remember that this is not a test, but merely a recording of how you sleep.

4. Will the sensor devices hurt?

No. Sometimes, in rubbing the skin or putting on the ear device, there are mild and temporary skin irritations. You may also feel a sensation of warmth where the oxygen-measuring device contacts your skin. However, these do not generally cause any significant discomfort.

5. Will I be given a drug to help me sleep?

No. In fact, the staff prefers, to the extent medically possible, that you be off sleeping medications for at least eight days before coming for the tests. Some drugs will need to be stopped even longer before the test. It is important not to consume any alcohol or caffeinated beverages on the day of testing.

**However, please do not stop any of your medications without first consulting your personal physician. The only medications that should be discontinued are those used to keep you alert or sleeping aids.

6. What is a Multiple Sleep Latency Test (MSLT)?

Some patients also participate in daytime testing. This test consists of a series of 20-minute naps. The same kind of information is measured as for a polysomnogram and the naps are given every two hours throughout the day. It will be asked that you try to go to sleep even if you feel you can't, and that you remain awake between the nap periods.

7. What should I bring?

You should bring the following:

- Your usual bed clothes (preferably two-piece pajamas)
- Something to read or work on while awake during the non-sleep periods
- Personal toiletry items
- A change of clothes for the next day, if desired
- Any needs medications (none will be supplied by the staff)
- A list of medications you have taken during the past two weeks.

The staff will provide towels and bedding.

8. Is this test covered by insurance?

For most patients, it is covered at least in part by their respective policies. However, each patient should check with their insurance company about the details. The sleep lab will provide descriptions of the tests, if this is useful for insurance purposes. If you have any insurance concerns, please contact the Program Secretary at 1-800-742-7844, ext. 3950 for outstate Nebraska, and 481-3950 locally.

9. What happens to the polysomnogram?

The record of your sleep will probably be about 1,100 pages long. It will then need to be scored and interpreted by a physician on our staff. The information will be used to give a diagnosis and recommended treatment. The final report will be forwarded to your referring physician. A follow-up visit with your referring physician is suggested to ensure that the recommended treatment is appropriate for you.