

Testing of the visual system

(Visual evoked potentials, VEP)

Purpose of the test

The purpose of the test is to study the function of visual pathways. The electrical change in brain activity caused by visual stimuli is measured, which provides information about the activity of the optic nerve and visual tract.

Preparing for the test

- Please ensure your hair is clean and dry, and avoid using hair gel, oil or other hair products. If your work includes welding, wash your hair especially carefully. Accumulated metallic dust in your hair can cause technical disturbances.
- Take any regular medications as normal. Please bring a list of your medications with you.
- **If you wear glasses (including reading glasses) please bring them with you.**
- Try to have a good night's sleep before the test. If you work in shifts, it is recommended to avoid an evening or a night shift on the day before the test.

Test procedure

At first, the skin on your face and head is cleaned. Small measurement sensors called electrodes are attached on the scalp with water-soluble conductor paste and the sensors are wired to a recording device. You will sit in a dimly lit room during the test. Your eyes will be tested separately and covered with an eyepatch one at a time. You will be asked to look at a changing checkerboard pattern on a screen or a flashing light. The test is painless and takes about an hour to complete.

After the test

The conductor paste will be removed after the test, although some residue may be left and you may wish to wash your hair again later when you get home. A clinical neurophysiologist will analyse the test results and a report will be sent to the clinic that asked for the test. They will inform you of the test results and any possible follow-up appointments.