

Actigraphy or movement activity registering

Purpose of the Examination



The actigraph is a small wristwatch-sized device that registers movement and is usually worn on the wrist. Based on the amount of movement, sleep phases can be differentiated from awake states with reasonable accuracy. The examination provides information e.g. about the time spent in bed, the total duration of sleep, sleep onset latency, and the number of awakenings.

Examination Process

The actigraph is programmed and attached to your wrist at the clinical neurophysiology unit. You will also receive instructions about using the device. This visit takes about half an hour. If you are right-handed, the actigraph will be worn on your left wrist, and if you are left-handed, it will be worn on your right wrist. In some cases, the measurement can be performed on your legs. You should take off the actigraph when taking a shower or sauna, swimming, or participating in contact sports. There is a signal button on the device that you should press whenever taking the actigraph off or putting it back on. You should also press the signal button whenever you go to sleep or get up.

You will be handed a sleep diary, which you should fill in with information about each sleeping session (night sleep, naps) during the registering period. You will also receive a questionnaire that includes questions about e.g. sleeping and tiredness. Specific instructions about filling in the diary and the questionnaire are provided during your visit to attach the device.

You can go normally to school or work, for example, during the examination. The device on your wrist will not bother you any more than a regular wristwatch. The examination usually lasts for two weeks, after which you should return the device and the filled-out forms in a separately agreed appointment.

After the Examination

The movement information registered by the actigraph is extracted on a computer. A clinical neurophysiologist will analyse the examination and write a report. The report is directed to the clinic that ordered the examination. They will inform you about the examination results and any possible follow-ups.