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Your child's sleep study



Your child is scheduled for a sleep study at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta. This is a test that looks at what happens to your child's body when he is sleeping. It checks your child's brain waves, breathing, heart rate and movements. Your child's doctor will use the study to see if your child has a sleep or breathing disorder.

Sleep studies at Children's are:

- Painless—no needles are used
- Done at night in a private room with a parent there
- Covered by most insurance companies

Before your child arrives:

- Give him a bath and wash his hair before the study.
- Do not use any conditioners, creams, body lotions or hair spray after the bath.
- Have your child eat a normal dinner before the study. He cannot have caffeine, such as soda, tea or chocolate the day of the study. No meals or food will be provided during the study.
- Keep your child awake after 1 p.m. the day of the study if he is older than age 2.
- Make sure you are ready to stay the night.
- Have someone care for your other children at home. We do not allow other children in the Sleep Center.

What to bring to the sleep study:

- Your child's medicines
- Pajamas or two-piece clothing, such as a T-shirt and shorts
- Snacks for before and after the sleep study

- A favorite toy, blanket or book for your child
- Diapers and wipes
- Bottles and formula, including formula for gastric tube (G-tube) feedings
- Any machines your child uses at night, such as:
 - Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) or Bilevel positive airway pressure (BPAP)
 - Ventilator, suction supplies or feeding pumps

Your child will not need his apnea monitor during the study. Use it as you normally do in the car seat on your ride to the sleep study.

Helping your child during the sleep study:

- You can stay with your child all night. We have a bed for one parent.
- You can leave your child's room for a few minutes to eat or relax. You may sit in the Sleep Center waiting room or get something to eat or drink in the hospital cafeteria or vending areas.
- Be positive and cheerful. Tell your child you think the sleep study is cool and fun.

Getting ready for the study

Infants: You cannot explain the sleep study to your baby. You can help him feel more secure if you:

- Bring a special blanket, toy or pacifier.
- Comfort him with your presence and voice.
- Bring juice or formula to last through the night.

Toddlers and preschool-age children:

Young children can become nervous or upset about the sleep study. The best time to talk with your child is on the day of the sleep study:

- Tell your child his doctor is giving him a test to make him feel better.
- Use simple words.
- Be honest.
- Tell your child you will stay with him in the same room during the sleep study.

School-age children: School-age children have good imaginations. They may be afraid if they imagine something much worse than the actual study.

- Tell your child he is going to the hospital to have a test.
- Use simple words to explain the sleep study.
- Be honest.
- Let your child know that you will be in the same room during the sleep study.

What happens during the sleep study?

- First, your child's head will be marked with washable markers.
- Twelve small, round sensors with soft, colored wires will be put on his head. These are called electrodes. They will not hurt your child.

- Two or more electrodes will be put on your child's chest. Those measure his heart rate. A small red light will be taped to his finger or toe. This measures the oxygen in his blood.
- Your child's breathing will be measured by two belts around his torso and a small piece of plastic taped under his nose.
- Technologists will study your child's sleep throughout the night. They will use computers, cameras and monitors.
- An intercom will be on at all times. This lets you talk to the technologists in the nearby monitoring room.
- Your child's sleep study will be finished between 5 a.m. and 6 a.m. The results will be sent to your child's doctor in about one week. You may call your child's doctor after one week for the results.

Getting the best results from the sleep study:

- Let your child fall asleep alone in the bed.
- Proper room temperature and lighting are important to the study. Ask your child's technologist to change them if needed. Do not change them by yourself.
- Stay quiet during the sleep study. Do not use a cellphone, computer or TV.
- If your child wakes up, let him try to fall back to sleep on his own. It is alright to let him cry for a few minutes before comforting him.
- Remind your child not to pull off anything that the sleep technologist puts on him.



Visit choa.org/sleep to watch a video about sleep studies or to learn more.