

Preparing for Your Admission in the Epilepsy Monitoring Unit (EMU)



At Mount Sinai, we provide our patients with the best epilepsy care possible.

Our top priority is helping you manage your seizures with minimal side effects, so that you can live your happiest, healthiest life.

As a part of your care, we may have you stay in our hospital's Epilepsy Monitoring Unit (EMU) for a short period of time.

Our EMUs provide the most advanced and comprehensive care possible.

During your stay in the EMU, our goal is to study your brain activity during a seizure. We will record your brain activity with an EEG. There will be a camera in your room so we can also record you on video. We use both the video and EEG records to see what happens when you have a seizure. This testing is called a video electroencephalogram (VEEG).

How long you stay in the EMU will depend on your unique condition. The average length of stay is 48 hours (two days) but can last up to one week. Talk to your doctor about how long they think you may need to stay in the EMU.

Your EMU admission may help us:

- Establish or confirm your epilepsy diagnosis
- Understand if you are having seizures or another type of non-seizure event
- Identify the type of epilepsy you have, and decide on the best treatment options
- Identify where in your brain your seizures are occurring
- Better understand your response to certain anti-seizure medications and make adjustments as needed
- Identify seizure activity you may not be aware of

The Mount Sinai Hospital

1468 Madison Avenue
Guggenheim Pavilion, 2nd floor
New York, NY 10029
T: 212-241-1900

Mount Sinai West

1000 Tenth Avenue, 1st floor
New York, NY 10019
T: 212-636-4700

Mount Sinai South Nassau

One Healthy Way
Oceanside, NY 11572
T: 516-632-4590

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What to Expect Before Your Stay

1. Our Nurse Coordinator will call you to schedule your admission.
2. Our team will work with your insurance company and let you know if there are any issues with your coverage.
3. On the day of your scheduled admission, a staff person from our Admitting Office will call you and tell you the exact time to arrive.

If you would like to contact the Admitting Office, please call the number for your hospital:

Mount Sinai Hospital: 212-241-1900

Mount Sinai West: 212-636-4700

Mount Sinai South Nassau: 516-632-4590

Please note, although it is very unlikely, it is possible your admission may be rescheduled.

This happens very rarely.

Preparing for Your Stay

All of our epilepsy doctors work closely as a team to care for our patients. During your hospital stay, your usual epilepsy doctor may not be the doctor caring for you. You will, however, receive exceptional care from expert providers who communicate in great detail about your condition, needs, and goals.

Other items to note:

- You will not be allowed to shower during your hospital stay.
- Please speak with your provider about hair care before and during your stay.
- Continue taking all of your medications as normal, and please bring them with you to the hospital (this includes any vitamins, supplements, and over-the-counter medications you take as well).
- Bring your seizure calendar or diary with you to the hospital.
- Pack loose-fitting clothes, including shirts which button up the front (do not pack tee shirts or pull over shirts).
- Bring items which will help keep you occupied, such as books, movies, your laptop, etc. (free Wi-Fi is available in all rooms).
- Pack any personal care items you would like to have with you throughout your stay.

What to Expect During Your Stay

Arriving to the Hospital: When you arrive to the hospital, please head directly to the Admissions Office. A staff member will take you to the EMU.

Arriving to the EMU: Once you are in the EMU, it is possible you may have a roommate. Members of your care team will take your medical history and complete an exam.

Placement of EEG Electrodes: A trained technician will place EEG electrodes on your head. This is not painful. The electrodes look like very small, metallic discs. They will be placed on your head with a special gel. The electrodes will monitor your brain activity. The technician will wrap your head in gauze to help keep the electrodes in place.

Camera in Your Room: We will record everything happening in your room through a camera. This is so we can view what happens during a seizure. Please know that anything you do in the room will be viewable on the camera.

IV: You may have an IV placed in your forearm. This is so we can give you rescue medications, if needed.

Daily Monitoring: Each day, your care team will review and discuss with you your EEG records. We encourage you to ask questions any time. We are here to make sure you are confident in the care you receive.

Capturing Seizure Activity: Your doctor may work with you to lower or stop your seizure medications. This is so they can observe seizure activity during your hospital stay. Your doctor may also ask you to stay awake most of the night to help bring on a seizure.

Visitors: Please refer to the hospital Visitor Policy to learn more about when visitors are allowed.

Discharge (Leaving the Hospital): Your discharge plan will be reviewed with you by our team on a daily basis. Your EEG will be disconnected on the day of your discharge. Your primary epilepsy doctor will be sent all information about your stay.

Seizure Activity During Your Stay

When You Have a Seizure: You will have an “event button” next to your bed. When you notice a seizure beginning, please push the “event button” if you can. A nurse will check on you and make sure you are safe.

If you are not able to push the “event button”, a nurse will come into your room as soon as they see your seizure beginning on camera.

Once your safety is confirmed, your nurse will ask you some basic questions and have you perform simple tasks.

We will give you emergency medication if you have a long seizure, or if you have multiple seizures within a certain period of time.

Safety Practices: We have many guidelines and practices in place to keep you safe during seizures while you are in the hospital.

- Staff will continuously monitor your video and brain activity so that we know if a seizure is occurring
- You will only be allowed to get in and out of bed with the help of a staff person, including to go to the bathroom
- All sides of your bed will be covered with pads
- You will not be allowed to chew gum or have hard candies (this can hide electrical activity in your brain)
- You will not be allowed to lay on your stomach

Questions?

It is important to us that you feel prepared, confident, and comfortable with your care. We are here to answer any questions you may have and to make sure you have all the information you need.

For any questions or concerns, please reach out to the EMU Coordinators:

Mount Sinai Hospital and Mount Sinai West: 212-241-7305

Mount Sinai South Nassau: 516-632-4070

Your EMU admission will help us better understand your condition so that we can provide you with the personalized care you need. Our compassionate, expert team of specialists is here to partner with you and support you throughout your stay.