Vestibular Evoked Myogenic Potential (VEMP)

Information for patients

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You have been referred for an assessment of part of your balance organ, which will last up to 60 minutes (one hour) and will be performed by an audiologist.

**What is VEMP testing?**

There are two types of VEMP tests; cervical and ocular.

The cervical VEMP (CVEMP) tests the saccule (sensory cells in the inner ear) and inferior balance nerve, which are part of the balance system. The saccule is responsible for detecting up and down movement. The saccule can also respond to loud sound played into the ear. The response to the loud sound can be measured from a large muscle in the neck.

The ocular VEMP (OVEMP) tests the utricle (sensory cells in the inner ear) and superior balance nerve, which are also part of the balance system. The utricle is responsible for detecting sideways movement. The utricle can also respond to loud sound played into the ear. The response to the loud sound can be measured from the muscles below the eye.

**What does the test involve?**

Firstly we apply some self-adhesive electrodes. These are connected by leads to a computer. Before we put the electrodes on the skin, underneath will be rubbed with some slightly abrasive gel, which helps ensure that the electrode and skin has a good contact. This is not painful, but may feel a little rough. The self-adhesive electrode is then placed on the skin.

For the CVEMP, an electrode is placed on each side of the neck on the large muscle and one at the base of the throat.

For the OVEMP, two electrodes are placed below each eye and one on the forehead.
You will be seated in a chair. **Please do not wear any makeup.** We will place small earphones in your ears and you will hear loud sounds for about 45 seconds. For the CVEMP, you will need to turn your head to the side. For the OVEMP, you will need to keep your head forwards and move your eyes to look upwards.

**Results**

After the test, the audiologist will discuss the results with you and if appropriate a report will be sent to your ear, nose and throat (ENT) consultant.

**Communication needs**

If you require an interpreter at your appointment please telephone 0121 371 4756 or email interpreting.service@uhb.nhs.uk.

**Students**

Please note that as this is a teaching hospital, a student may carry out some or all of your appointment under supervision of a qualified audiologist. If you do not wish to have a student present during your appointment please let reception know on your arrival.

**Patient transport**

If you are eligible for patient transport, please contact West Midlands Ambulance non-emergency Patient Transport Service on 0800 035 6511. Please note that transport is only available for Monday to Friday appointments.
The Trust provides free monthly health talks on a variety of medical conditions and treatments. For more information visit www.uhb.nhs.uk/health-talks.htm or call 0121 371 4323.