

Somato-sensory Evoked Potentials (SEP)

What is an SEP examination?

These are tests of the nerve pathways from the arm through the spinal cord to the brain (UPPER LIMB) or the nerve pathways from the leg through the spinal cord to the brain (LOWER LIMB). An electrical stimulator is used to pass brief electrical pulses along the nerve. You will be able to feel the electrical currents as a pulsing/tapping sensation. You will also get a small twitch of your hand or foot with the pulses.

The test takes upto 60 minutes to complete and your results will be sent to the referring GP/clinician and are usually available within ten days.

How is the test performed?

Leads are attached to your shoulder, neck and scalp (UPPER LIMB) or attached to your knee, back and scalp (LOWER LIMB). The leads are attached with sticky white paste which will be removed at the end of the test. The tibial nerve in your ankle will be stimulated with the electrical impulse. The responses are recorded by the leads. The responses are seen on a screen as wave patterns.

There are no after effects from this test.

How do I prepare for the test?

If you are taking any medication, please continue to take it and bring a list of your medication with you. You may continue to eat meals as normal.

It would be advisable to wear loose fitting, comfortable clothes