

Sleep studies

Information for patients

This information sheet answers some of the questions you may have about having an overnight sleep study. It explains the risks and the benefits of the procedure and what you can expect when you come to hospital. If you have any other questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to the physiologist caring for you.

Confirming your identity

Before you have a treatment or procedure, our staff will ask you your name and date of birth and check your ID band. If you do not have an ID band we will also ask you to confirm your address. If we do not ask these questions, then please ask us to check. Ensuring your safety is our primary concern.

What is a sleep study?

Sleeping is something most of us take for granted until, for one reason or another, we cannot get a good night's sleep. There can be a wide range of causes for this, including anxiety or stress, but there may also be a physical cause like obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA).

There are two types of sleep studies that we carry out in the Chest Unit: an overnight oximetry study and a PAT sleep study. These tests are performed at home but will require you (or someone on your behalf) to come to the hospital to pick up the monitor.

An overnight oximetry sleep study will measure your blood oxygen levels and heart rate while you are asleep.

A PAT sleep study will measure your blood oxygen levels, heart rate, snoring, body position and chest motion while you are asleep. It can also detect how many hours you slept for.

You will need to wear the device for one night and return it the following day.

Why do I need this test?

You have been referred for a sleep study to find the cause of your sleep symptoms and if your breathing is interrupted while you sleep.

Signs that you may have sleep apnoea include:

- loud snoring
- stopping breathing or struggling to breathe
- feeling of choking or gasping
- waking up a lot during the night

Symptoms of OSA include:

- waking up sleepy and unrefreshed
- morning headaches
- difficulty concentrating and feeling groggy
- poor memory
- feeling depressed, irritable or other changes of mood
- poor co-ordination
- loss of sex drive

The sleep study will help to diagnose sleep conditions like OSA. If the test shows that you have OSA then by treating it we can help to improve your quality of life.

What are the benefits of having a sleep study?

- To determine suitability for surgery.
- To assess how well treatment that you might be having is working (for example, CPAP, NIV, MAA or oxygen).

What are the risks of having a sleep study?

There are no risks associated with having these types of sleep studies apart from slight discomfort when wearing the probe.

Are there any alternatives?

The alternatives to overnight oximetry or PAT sleep studies are a respiratory sleep test (limited polysomnography) or full polysomnography. These sleep studies involve additional bands around the chest, and stomach, and a sensor placed under your nose and to your head and limbs. We do not offer these sleep studies at King's College Hospital. If appropriate, your doctor may be able to refer you for these at an alternative hospital.

Consent

We must by law obtain your verbal consent to this test beforehand. Staff will explain the risks, benefits and alternatives to you. If you are unsure of any aspect of the test proposed, please do not hesitate to speak with a senior member of the staff again.

Do I need to prepare for my sleep study test?

Before undertaking both types of sleep studies, please do not consume alcohol, drink caffeine and avoid napping during the day.

For the PAT sleep study, please remove any false nails, gels or nail polish as this will interfere with the readings. Please also do not sleep with your mobile phone or any other electrical devices near to you. If you need to use your mobile phone for your alarm, then place your device on airplane mode as the signal from the electronic device can interfere with the study recording.

You will also need to ensure you can return the device the following day.

What happens before my sleep study test?

The physiologist will measure your height, weight and neck circumference.

You will be required to complete a sleep questionnaire. This tells us how sleepy you feel during the daytime as well as your sleeping habits. There are also questions about your general health and medications.

What happens during my sleep study test?

The physiologist will show you how to use the sleep monitor.

What happens during an overnight oximetry sleep study?

The overnight oximeter is like wearing a watch. You will be shown how to put the strap on and instructed on the correct positioning of the probe on your thumb. They will then show you where the 'on' " button is and how to switch it on prior to going to sleep.

What happens during a PAT sleep study?

The WatchPAT is also like wearing a watch but has an extra lead that is attached to your chest. You will be shown how to attach the strap to your wrist and how to position the chest sensor with the sticky tab to your sternum (the upper chest bone just below your neck).

You will be instructed on the correct positioning of the finger probe and how to inflate the probe and turn it on.

Upon waking the next morning, the monitors should be returned to the Chest Unit.

How long does the test take?

The test should be performed for the full length of time that you sleep for. Ideally, we need a minimum of four hours' worth of data to have an acceptable study.

What happens after my sleep study test?

Once you have completed your sleep study you will need to return it back to the Chest Unit, or someone else can return it on your behalf. The study will then be downloaded and analysed. A sleep doctor will then review the results and you will be sent a letter with the results or a face-to-face appointment will be arranged.

Additional sources of information

[Tests to measure your breathing during sleep | Asthma + Lung UK \(blf.org.uk\)](#)

[Patient Information \(artp.org.uk\)](#)

Who to contact?

If you have any queries or concerns after your operation, please contact the Chest Unit.

Tel: 020 3299 4743

Email: kch-tr.ChestUnitAdmin@nhs.net

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

Sharing your information

We have teamed up with Guy's and St Thomas' Hospitals in a partnership known as King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre. We are working together to give our patients the best possible care, so you might find we invite you for appointments at Guy's or St Thomas'. To make sure everyone you meet always has the most up-to-date information about your health, we may share information about you between the hospitals.

Care provided by students

We provide clinical training where our students get practical experience by imaging patients. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you do not want students to be involved in your care. Your imaging will not be affected by your decision.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. They can also pass on praise or thanks to our teams.

PALS at King's College Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5 9RS

Tel: 020 3299 3601

Email: kch-tr.palsdh@nhs.net

PALS at Princess Royal University Hospital, Farnborough Common, Orpington, Kent BR6 8ND

Tel: 01689 863252

Email: kch-tr.palspruh@nhs.net

If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact our Communications and Interpreting telephone line on 020 3299 4826 or email kch-tr.accessibility@nhs.net