What to Expect During a Sleep Study
Hi! My name is Ben. I hear your doctor wants you to have a sleep study done to learn more about how you sleep.

I just had a sleep study done too! I will walk you through all the steps so you can be ready for yours when it is your turn.

This will be different from a regular visit to the hospital because you will be spending the night at the Sleep Lab.
Did you know the MGH Sleep Center Lab is actually located in a hotel? The rooms are so nice and comfortable! It’s like being on vacation!

A family member or other caregiver can spend the night too.

You can bring your favorite stuff from home so that you will feel relaxed, like snacks, a book, or an iPad.
When you first arrive, you will meet everyone who works there. You will also meet the sleep tech who will help you all night with your sleep study.

This is Kevin, my sleep tech. He showed me all the machines and supplies, explained step by step, and answered all my questions.

You might work with him too, or you might work with a different sleep tech. They are all really nice and helpful.
After setting out all the supplies, your sleep tech will help you get ready.

**Don’t worry. There is no part of the sleep study that hurts.**

First, a sticky jelly will be used to stick some colorful wires on your chest and legs. It may feel a little strange at first, but you will get used to it. It will not hurt at all.
Then, your sleep tech will measure your head and use a red pencil to draw small dots on it. Here, more colorful wires will be placed all around your head.

The wires check your breathing, heartbeat, and brain activity while you sleep. **They will not hurt.**
Next, 2 soft bands will be placed around your chest and stomach. These also check your breathing.

They may feel a little strange at first too, but you will get used to them. **They will not hurt.**
Some people may need to use something called a CPAP mask to help them breathe better while they sleep.

You might get to try on the CPAP mask before you go to sleep, just in case you need it later.

Not all people will need to use this mask during their sleep study.
At the very end, a little plastic tube will be placed around your nose to check your breathing.

Also, a special tape will be wrapped around your finger. This checks the oxygen in your body while you sleep.

They will not hurt.
All right... Let’s do this!

Don’t worry. You will not do any part of this alone.

My dad slept on a cot right next to my bed. He was with me all night in case I needed anything.

Your family member or caregiver will be there with you too.

When everyone is settled and comfortable, the lights will be turned off and you will go to sleep.
All done!

The next morning, your sleep tech will wake you up and help take all the stuff off. This will go by fast and will not hurt at all.

You will get to take a shower in the room if you want to. Then, it will be time to go home and you will get to sleep in your own bed again.
I hope you found this helpful.

I had a great experience at the Sleep Lab and hope that you will too.

See you later!
It is okay to feel nervous about having a sleep study. Your sleep tech will be there to answer your questions and make sure you are comfortable.

**Again, there is no part of the sleep study that hurts.**

Here are some ways to help you relax if you feel nervous:

- Take 3 slow, deep breaths
- Count to 10, out loud or in your head
- Hold your family member’s or caregiver’s hand
- Watch TV or listen to music
- Ask questions
Write the date and time of your sleep study here.

Date: ___________________  Time: ________________

If you have any questions, you can write them here so you don’t forget to ask them!

Questions I have about my sleep study:
Written by Dr. Alexandra Garza Flores and Ben Majewski

Reviewed for plain language by the staff of the Maxwell & Eleanor Blum Patient and Family Learning Center

Photos courtesy of Dr. Alexandra Garza Flores

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