

## INFORMATION REGARDING EVOKED POTENTIALS

Your physician has requested that you have Visual Evoked Potentials (VEP) or Brainstem Auditory Evoked Potentials (BAER). These diagnostic tests are used to measure the electrical activity in certain areas of the brain and spinal cord. Electrical activity is produced by stimulation of specific sensory nerve pathways.

**WHAT IS EVOKED POTENTIAL TESTING?** Evoked potentials test and record how quickly and completely the nerve signals reach the brain. Evoked potentials are used because they can indicate problems along nerve pathways that are too subtle to show up during a neurologic examination or to be noticed by the person. The disruption may not even be visible on MRI exam. Evoked potentials are used to show abnormalities in the function of nerve pathways.

### **TYPES OF EVOKED POTENTIALS/RESPONSES:**

- Visual Evoked Potentials (VEP or VER): the patient sits before a screen in which alternating patterns are displayed.
- Brainstem Auditory Evoked Potentials (BAEP or BAER): the patient listens to a series of clicks in each ear.

### **WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE TEST?**

During an evoked potential test, wires are attached to the scalp. The testing is harmless and painless. No needles or injections are involved, and there is no radiation. A neurologist or a neurophysiologist who has a special training in these tests should interpret the results. Information provided by these tests will be considered, along with other findings from a clinical history, neurological exam, MRI, and other clinical or laboratory information when diagnosing a medical condition.

### **PREPARATION FOR THE TEST:**

Wash and dry hair and do not put any hair products such as hairspray, oil, gel, mousse etc. on it. Hair can be braided, but not weaved. Those products interfere with the electrode hookup on the scalp and may prevent us from doing the test.