



Your child's X-ray to look at their swallowing (contrast swallow test - up to age 10)

Department of Radiology

Information for Patients

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Introduction

This leaflet has important information about how your child must get ready for this test. If your child is old enough, you can go through this leaflet with them. It is important that your child knows what to expect when they come for the test so that it can be completed quickly and easily.

Important information for parents and carers

Before the appointment:

- **If your child has diabetes** please contact the Radiology Department for further advice on 0116 258 6898. If your child has diabetes they should have been given an early morning appointment. If this has not happened it may be that we do not know that your child is diabetic. You may also contact your child's normal diabetes care provider to discuss the eating and drinking instructions in this leaflet.
- **If you need an interpreter, or if you have any special requirements**, please contact the Radiology Department for further information.
- **Medicines prescribed by your doctor should be taken as usual** unless you have been told otherwise by the doctor.
- Other children will **not** be allowed in the X-ray room whilst this test is being done. If you have other children, please make child care arrangements for them and do not bring them into hospital if possible.
- **Follow the instructions in this leaflet** on how your child must get ready for this test.
- **Getting to the hospital** - transport has not been arranged for this appointment. If transport is needed please contact either your GP or the Radiology Department.

Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

- **Support for people with learning disabilities** - there is support available in our hospitals for patients with learning disabilities. Please contact the learning disability specialist nursing team on 0116 250 2809. Tell them when the appointment is and what examination or test has been booked.

What is a swallow test?

This X-ray is done to look at what happens to the food when your child eats. We give them a drink that will show up when we take X-ray pictures of their tummy. The drink is called contrast.

- If your child is having a barium swallow test, they will be given a milkshake flavoured drink with barium.
- If your child is having a water soluble swallow test, they will be given a colourless liquid. It may taste of orange.

How should my child get ready for the swallow test?

Please go through this leaflet with your child if you want to.

Eating and drinking instructions:

Your child must not have any food or drink for 4 hours before their appointment. It is important that your child's tummy is empty when they have this X-ray test. It is ok to have small sips of water if needed to take medication.



Medicines should be taken as usual unless you have been told otherwise by the doctor.

At the appointment:

1 parent or carer may go into the X-ray room with your child when the test takes place. You will not be allowed to stay in the X-ray room if you are pregnant or think you could be.

What to bring with you:

- You can bring a **cup, feeding bottle or teat** that your child is familiar with for having the contrast drink during the test.
- Your child may be able to wear their own **spare clothes** for the test. If you can, please bring a plain T-shirt with no decoration so that it does not show up on X-ray, and spare trousers.
- If you are pregnant or think you might be, you may want to bring another parent or carer with you to support your child during the test. You will not be allowed to stay in the X-ray room if you are pregnant or think you could be.
- You can bring some **food and drink** for your child to have after the appointment.

What happens when we arrive for the swallow test?

When you get to the Radiology Department you will be shown to the Children's X-ray Department.

We may ask your child to change into a hospital gown. If you prefer you can bring a change of clothes for your child. This could be a plain T-shirt without any decoration so that it does not show up on X-ray, and spare trousers.

When you are ready we will take your child into the X-ray room. 1 parent or carer can come in.

What happens in the X-ray room?

- We will talk to you about the X-ray test. You can ask any questions that you may have.
- We will ask your child to lay down on the X-ray table.
- We will give your child a contrast drink. For a barium swallow test, this will be a milkshake flavoured drink called barium contrast. For a water soluble swallow test, it will be a colourless contrast drink. This drink will allow us to see the inside of your child's tummy on our X-ray cameras.

If your child has a plastic feeding tube going into their tummy for nutrition, we may inject some or all of the contrast drink through this tube.

Babies and toddlers will be fed the drink from a bottle, feeding cup, or have it syringed into their mouth. If they have a favourite cup or teat, you may want to bring this with you.

- We take the X-ray pictures when your child drinks and swallows the liquid.
- We will ask your child to roll onto their side. This is so we can take X-ray pictures in different positions.

How long will the test take?

The test will take between 10 and 20 minutes. The time will vary slightly for each person.

Who will be in the X-ray room?

A doctor who specialises in imaging and X-ray treatments (a radiologist) will do the test.

A radiographer will move and control the special X-ray equipment.

An assistant practitioner and a radiology assistant may be in the room to help you.

As we are a teaching hospital a student may also be in the room. If you do not want a student in the room during your child's test, please let us know.

What happens when the test is finished?

After the test is finished you can go home. Your child can eat and drink as usual.

The contrast drink will go through your child's tummy and pass out in their poo within a few days.



Are there any side effects from the contrast drink?

- If your child had the barium drink, their poo may look white or lighter in colour for a few days. Barium can cause constipation. This means it can be harder to poo. To help prevent your child from getting constipation, give them plenty of fluids and foods high in fibre until the barium leaves their body.
- If your child had the colourless water soluble drink, they may have mild diarrhoea for 1 or 2 days. Their poo may be more runny and they may need to rush to the toilet to poo.

How do I find out what the results are?

You will not get the results straight away. After the test we will tell you who the results will go to and how to get the results.

The radiologist will look at the X-ray pictures again. The results will be sent to the GP or hospital doctor who wanted your child to have this test.

If your child is an inpatient the results will be given to the doctor looking after them on the ward.

What are the risks from exposure to radiation in this test?

The risk from having X-rays is very small. We are all exposed to natural background radiation every day of our lives. This comes from the sun, the food we eat, and the ground. Each X-ray gives a dose on top of this natural background radiation. The radiation from the X-rays during a contrast swallow test is equivalent to getting a few months of natural background radiation.

Any questions or concerns about the use of X-rays can be answered at the time of the appointment. We try to keep your child's exposure to X-rays as low as we can.

What if I need to talk to someone?

If you have any questions or concerns, or cannot make your appointment, please call the Radiology Department on **0116 258 8765 (option 1)** - Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm (but not on bank holidays).



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على هذه المعلومات بلغةٍ أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل
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Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk