

Video fluoroscopic swallow

Your child is scheduled for a video fluoroscopic swallow study at the Children's Hospitals and Clinics site checked below.

Date: _____

Time: _____

Check-in time: _____

Please bring your insurance card with you.

Children's - Minneapolis
Radiology, 1st floor
2525 Chicago Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Children's - St. Paul
Patient Registration, 1st floor
345 North Smith Avenue
St. Paul, Minnesota

Children's - Woodwinds
1925 Woodwinds Drive
Woodbury, Minnesota

Plan to arrive 15 minutes before your appointment time to check in and complete registration paperwork.

What is a video fluoroscopic swallow study?

A video fluoroscopic swallow study (VFS) is a video X-ray study of a person's swallowing.

Why does my child need it?

The VFS is done to check for problems with swallowing that may cause trouble with breathing or eating.

Can I be with my child during the test?

Yes, you can be in the room unless you are pregnant. It is recommended that pregnant women avoid exposure to X-rays.

What should we do before the tests?

Do not give your child anything to eat or drink for 3 hours before the test. It is important that your child has an empty stomach and is hungry at the time of the test. If this is a problem, please contact the Developmental and Rehabilitation Services department at the site of your child's test. See phone numbers at the end of this document.

Read and discuss this information with your child. Explain how the test is done, and answer as many questions as you can.

How is the VFS done?

A VFS does not hurt. No tubes or needles will be used, and your child will be awake for the study.

The VFS is done by a radiologist and either a speech language pathologist or occupational therapist. A video X-ray will be taken of your child while eating and/or drinking.



Depending on age, your child will either sit in a feeder seat (similar to a car seat), stand, or sit in an adaptive seat. Your child will then be given some food that has barium added. The food may be liquid, pudding, or crackers, depending on your child's age.

If there is something specific your child likes to eat, or wants to eat but has difficulty, bring it with you so it can be used during the study. If your child has food allergies, please bring food from home.

What is barium?

Barium is a white mineral that can be seen on X-rays. It has a chalky taste and comes in liquid or paste form. It is mixed with liquids and/or food so they can be seen more clearly during the study. It will not hurt your child.

What can I expect after the test?

Although your child will eat during the test, it will not be a full meal. Your child may be hungry, and will likely be able to eat right after the test.

After the test, most children who have regular bowel movements do not have a problem passing the barium. There will be white barium mixed with the stool. The color of the stool should return to normal in less than 3 days.

How should I care for my child after the VFS?

Your child may return to normal activities. Give extra fluids to help the barium pass more easily. Watch for trouble passing the barium. Depending on the results of the VFS, your child may need a special feeding plan.

When should I call the doctor?

- cramping
- trouble having bowel movements
- any other problems or concerns

What else do I need to know?

Please bring anything you use to feed your child such as a bottle, nipple, "sippy cup," or any special adaptive utensils. Children may find it helpful to bring comfort items or a favorite toy to help them feel more comfortable.

Questions?

This sheet is not specific to your child but provides general information. For questions about why your child is being tested, please ask your child's doctor. If you have questions about the test or how to prepare your child, please call the Developmental and Rehabilitation Services department at the hospital where your child will have the study:

Minneapolis	(612) 813-6709
St. Paul	(651) 220-6880
Woodwinds	(651) 232-6860

For more reading material about this and other health topics, please call or visit the Family Resource Center library, or visit: www.childrensmn.org/A-Z.

Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota
Patient/Family Education
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Minneapolis, MN 55404
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