

Videofluoroscopy by the Speech and Language Therapy Department

You (or your relative) have been referred for a videofluoroscopy investigation.

What is it?

It is a technique used to gain more information about swallowing problems.

You will already have had at least one clinical swallowing assessment conducted by a Speech and Language Therapist.

The assessment process for videofluoroscopy is very similar, but a moving x-ray video of your head and neck is produced while you swallow.

What happens?

The procedure itself takes about 15 minutes. You will either stand up or sit in a chair (or your own wheelchair).

You will be asked to swallow small amounts of food and drink of different consistencies, just like in your previous swallowing assessment(s).

For videofluoroscopy, barium will be added to the food/drink so that they show up on the x-ray. The barium is not unpleasant to taste but it can leave a temporary white coating on your lips and mouth.

The Speech and Language Therapist will discuss the findings and recommendations with you during and after the procedure.

A report will be written; you will receive a copy unless you opt out.

Note:

- There is no need to stop eating or drinking before the investigation.
- You will not need to undress or change for the investigation.

Why do I need it?

1. To look for possible aspiration i.e. food/drink entering the airway.
2. To see if certain food or drink consistencies are easier to swallow than others.
3. To see if there are any strategies that might make swallowing easier.
4. To help your Speech and Language Therapist plan further treatment.

What are the possible risks or side effects?

- There is a risk that some food or drink may go down into the airway (be aspirated). All care will be taken to minimise this risk. A physiotherapist may carry out respiratory physiotherapy after the procedure if large amounts of food or drink are aspirated. This is a very rare event.
- The radiation dose for this procedure is low and we will also take care to minimise the amount of x-ray radiation to which you are exposed.

- Very rarely people may be allergic to barium. Please tell a doctor or healthcare professional straight away if you have a rash, itching, noisy breathing, trouble breathing, light headedness, dizziness, or fainting after taking barium.
- Occasionally people experience constipation, bloating or diarrhoea after the procedure.

Where do I have to go?

Medical Imaging (x-ray) Department

Area M, Level 1

Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital (Wonford)

Please report to Medical Imaging (x-ray)
Reception 10 minutes before the time of your appointment.

Who will be there?

Two Speech and Language Therapists, plus a Radiographer. A Consultant Radiologist will be available if needed.

*If you have any other questions, please ask your Speech and Language Therapist or contact the RD&E Speech and Language Therapy Department on **01392 402489** or **rduh.therapyservices@nhs.net** (please write Speech Therapy in the subject line)*

The Trust cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information given if the leaflet is not used by Royal Devon staff undertaking procedures at the Royal Devon hospitals.

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