

# Videofluoroscopy

---

The x-ray department has received a request for you to have a videofluoroscopy. This leaflet tells you about this examination. It explains the procedure and what the possible risks and side effects are. If you have any questions please ask your speech and language Therapist (SLT) or contact the x-ray department.

## What is a Videofluoroscopy?

A videofluoroscopy is an X-ray examination of your swallowing. You will be asked to swallow different food and drink consistencies mixed with barium. Barium is a white, chalky liquid which shows up on x-ray images as x-rays do not pass through barium. The x-ray will be recorded to allow us to review and analyse your swallow function so that we are able to provide recommendations for food and drink and any further referrals that we deem necessary to help manage your swallow.

## What are the benefits of a Videofluoroscopy?

The X-ray allows your speech and language therapist and the radiographer to watch and record what happens when you eat and drink in real time. It allows us to identify if there are any strategies or manoeuvres that will aid the safety and comfort of your swallow. It can establish whether you are aspirating (when food/drink enters your airway) and what the safest food and drink consistencies are.

## Are there any risks with having a Videofluoroscopy?

All x-ray procedures involve exposure to radiation in varying amounts. In all x-ray examinations the amount of radiation is kept to the minimum necessary.

You will be required to inform the team of any medications you are on and any allergies/food intolerances or you have. If for any reason you are unable to eat the foods that you are given please let the team know so that we can offer a suitable alternative. If you think you may be pregnant, please inform either your speech and language therapist or the X-ray department, as your appointment may need to be changed or cancelled.

During the examination you may be seen to aspirate. Aspiration as mentioned above is the term used to describe when food/drink enters your airway. If you do aspirate, it can help to take regular deep breaths, cough to clear the aspirated material and keep active if you are able to do so. Aspiration can lead to chest infections so it is important to monitor for any concerns. If you feel unwell please discuss with your doctor.

## How can I prepare for the examination?

You do not need to do anything prior to assessment. If you are currently eating and drinking or use a feeding tube, you can do this as normal prior to the assessment. You should continue to take your prescribed medicines. You may be able to bring a friend/relative along to your appointment, however for safety reasons they will not be allowed to enter the x ray room with you, except in special circumstances.

# What will happen when I arrive for my Videofluoroscopy appointment?

When you arrive at the hospital, go to the X-ray reception desk and you will be shown to the X-ray waiting area. If you are coming for an outpatient appointment, you will be asked to get changed into a hospital gown. If you are an in-patient, the hospital porters will collect you from the ward and escort you to the X-ray department.

## What hospital staff might I meet?

You will be cared for by a small team which will include an advanced practitioner radiographer and a speech and language therapist.

## What happens during the examination?

You will be taken into the x-ray room where the procedure will be explained and you will have the opportunity to ask any questions and discuss any food allergies/intolerances. We will ask for your consent to proceed.

You will be asked to sit or stand (if you are able) next to the X-ray machine. The machine will be at your head height and will be moved by the radiographer to get the best image. You will be asked to chew and swallow a variety of food/drink consistencies depending on your difficulties. You may be asked to try different positions or strategies to make your swallow safer or more efficient. The whole examination will last approximately 20 minutes.

## What happens after the examination?

The radiographer and speech and language therapist may give you some immediate feedback, however until the images have been formally reviewed they are unable to provide specific information. If you need to make any changes to your food and/or drink, or start any exercises, these will be discussed with you. If you require any follow up, we will arrange this via your community speech and language therapist. If you are an inpatient, you will be taken back to your ward, and your treating speech and language therapist will come to speak to you later to discuss the results and management plan.

## Possible side effects:

For a day or two following the videofluoroscopy your bowel movements may look white because of the barium; this is normal. Sometimes the barium can cause temporary constipation. Drinking increased quantities of fluids can help if you are safe to do so.

Following the examination if your bowel movements undergo any significant changes or you have concerns regarding your chest please seek advice from your doctor.

## Useful phone numbers:

Hospital switchboard (Bournemouth Hospital): **01202 303626**

Radiology appointments (Monday - Friday; 9am - 4.30pm): **0300 019 4109 / 0300 019 4106**

Speech and Language Therapy (Monday - Friday; 8am-4pm): **0300 019 4437 / 0300 019 4032**

---

The Royal Bournemouth Hospital, Castle Lane East, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH7 7DW

Author: **Helen Parker** Date: **July 2021** Version: **One** Review date: **July 2024** Ref: **409/21**

t: 01202 303626

w: [www.uhd.nhs.uk](http://www.uhd.nhs.uk)



@UHD\_NHS



@UHTrust



@uhd\_nhs