

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Video fluoroscopy

You have been referred by the Speech and Language Therapy department because you have had some difficulties swallowing. The speech and language therapists are trained to assess and treat swallowing problems. The x-ray will give us information about your swallowing difficulties, what might be causing them and how we can improve them where possible.

How long will it take?

The procedure takes approximately 20 minutes.

Can I eat and drink before the examination?

Yes (providing you are not already nil by mouth).

If there are particular foods or drinks you would like us to test you on, for example you find them difficult to swallow, please bring small amounts of these with you.

What should you expect?

The x-ray does not hurt. You will sit on a chair and the machine will be brought down close to your left side.

You will be given small amounts of food and/or fluids mixed with a white powder called barium. You will be given different consistencies of food and fluids to try.

You may be asked to try different head positions such as putting your head down towards your chest while you are swallowing. This may help you swallow more safely.

Who will be there?

A radiographer will work the x-ray machine.

A speech and language therapist will advise what consistencies of foods and/or fluids to trial you with and any strategies (for example head movements) to try.

Is it harmful?

Video fluoroscopy, like any x-ray examination, uses ionising radiation, which can be harmful to you. The minimum amount of x-rays possible will be used to minimise the risk. You will only have the examination if the whole team looking after you think that the benefits will outweigh the risks.

Some of the barium may get into your lungs if your swallowing is not working properly. Most people have no difficulty coping with the small amounts that may enter their lungs. Others may need physiotherapy to help get rid of it.

What happens afterwards?

You will receive some information about your swallowing straight away. You may be able to view the examination to help you understand the information in more detail.

A DVD of the procedure will be made and analysed by the speech and language therapist. A report will be produced using the findings and sent to your doctor and a copy will be sent to you. Your regular speech and language therapist will review your swallowing where appropriate at a later date.

Contact details

If you have any queries, please contact the x-ray department on 01623 672202.

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you. External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them. If you require a full list of references (if relevant) for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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| To be completed by the Communications office Leaflet code: PIL202504-03-VF Created: August 2021 / Revised: April 2025 / Review Date: April 2027 |
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