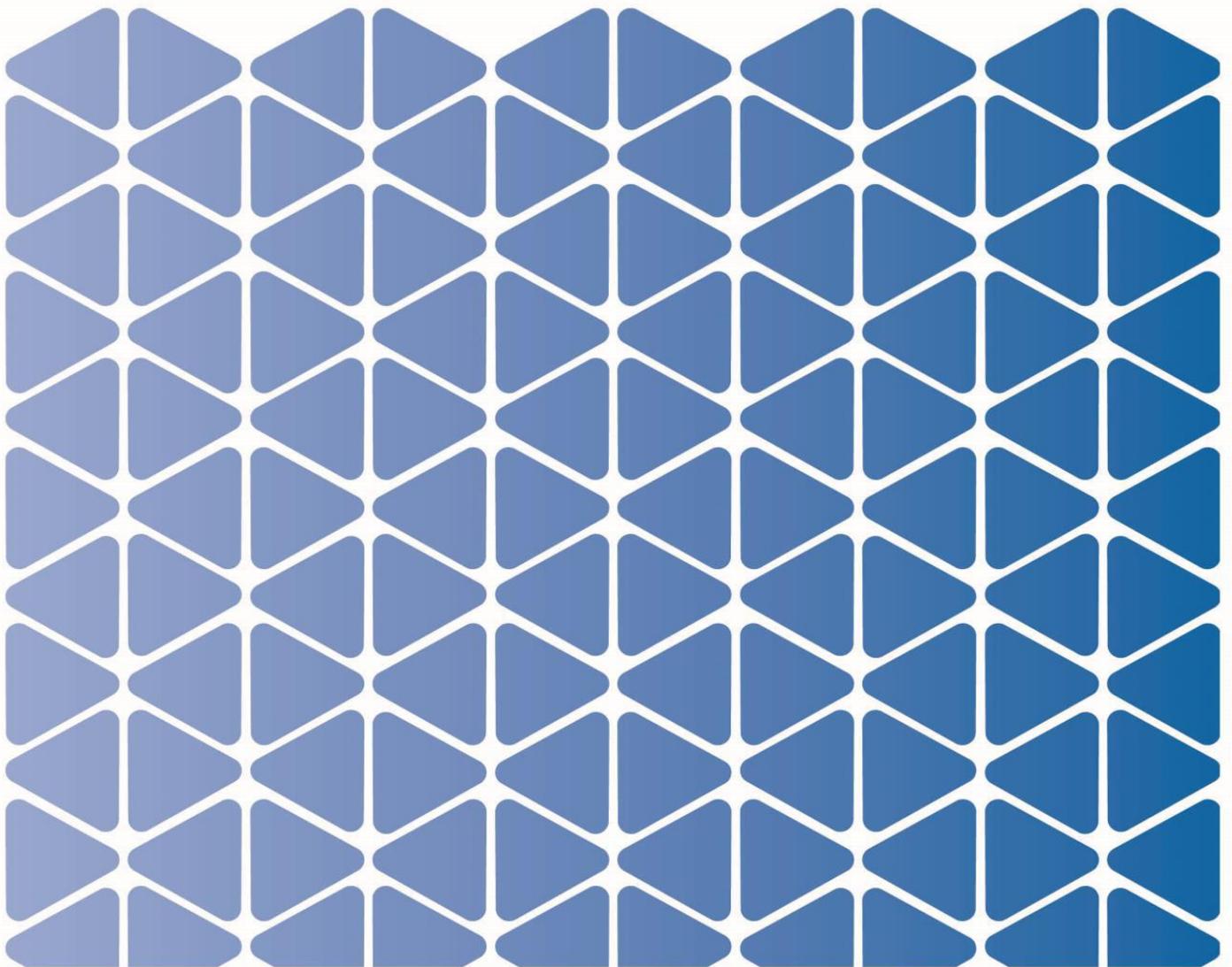




PATIENT INFORMATION

# SUPERVISED FEED TEST



It has been recommended that your child has a food challenge test called a 'Supervised Feed'.

This leaflet explains some of the benefits, risks and alternatives to a supervised feed. We want you and your child to have an informed choice so you can make the right decision. Please ask your healthcare team about anything you do not fully understand or want to be explained in more detail.

We recommend that you read this leaflet carefully. You and your doctor (or other appropriate health professional) will also need to record that you agree for your child to have the procedure by signing a consent form, which your health professional will give you.

### **What is a supervised feed?**

A supervised feed is where a normal sized portion of food is offered to your child to eat in a single sitting, usually 30 minutes. This food might be one they have never eaten before. We will do this under observation and make sure they are well with no signs of an allergic reaction, before going home. The whole process takes about two and half hours.

### **Why has my child been offered a supervised feed?**

Although your child's allergy tests suggest that your child will tolerate the food, there is a very small chance that your child will have an allergic reaction. We would therefore like to introduce this food in a safe environment in Worcester Royal Hospital. There is another type of food introduction called an 'Oral Food Challenge' but this is a much slower and more cautious introduction in children who have reacted previously.

### **Benefits of the procedure**

A supervised feed test is used to exclude an allergy to a food. It is used when we suspect that there is not an underlying allergy to a food. Knowing that they can tolerate the food will widen their diet and help relieve any food related anxiety.

### **What are the possible risks?**

There is a small risk that your child might have an allergic reaction. Mild to moderate allergic reactions, which are the most common, include: urticaria ('hives'), angioedema (deep tissue swelling), itching, nasal congestion and sneezing, swollen or watery eyes. This is treated with an antihistamine called cetirizine.

There are few serious risks. We do not challenge patients or give them a supervised feed if we believe they will have an anaphylactic reaction. An anaphylactic reaction is a serious, life threatening allergic reaction affecting the airway, breathing or conscious

level. It can develop rapidly after ingestion of the food. If this occurs then we will treat it immediately with an adrenaline injection and other emergency treatment, such as salbutamol.

Children and young people with eczema may develop a flare of eczema a few days afterwards if the allergen stimulates it, but this is unusual and most children with eczema don't experience this.

Your child will be cared for by a skilled team of doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals who are involved in this type of procedure frequently. If an allergic reaction arises, we will be able to assess them and treat them appropriately.

### **Other procedures which are available**

The alternative to not undergoing a supervised feed is to continue avoiding the food. When the results of the skin and/or blood tests are higher, children usually undergo an 'oral food challenge' rather than a 'supervised feed'. A food challenge takes longer since the portion of food is split into smaller doses and given over a longer period of time.

### **Preparation**

We will usually ask you to continue with your child's normal medication so please bring it with you.

But we will ask you to refrain giving your child any antihistamines in the five days (a minimum of 72 hours) prior to a challenge as this may result in a false negative result.

Common antihistamines include:

- Chlorphenamine Maleate (Piriton),
- Cetirizine (Piriteze, Zirtek),
- Loratadine (Claritin)
- Fexofenadine (Allegra, Telfast)
- Diphenhydramine (Benadryl)

Some other medicines also contain antihistamines. If you are unsure whether your medications contain antihistamines please contact us for further advice before the date you are booked.

If your child has asthma, it is important that their asthma is well controlled and stable on the day of the procedure. If they have been prescribed inhalers, you must continue to use the preventer inhalers, including on the morning of the supervised feed. However, please contact the allergy team if your child needs to use their reliever inhaler (Salbutamol, blue inhaler) more regularly in the week leading up to the

supervised feed. Increased use of the reliever (salbutamol) inhaler might indicate an asthma exacerbation and we would need to reschedule the appointment.

Children on stronger inhaled steroids will not be offered a supervised feed. If your child is prescribed a new preventer inhaler after the decision to offer a supervised feed then please let us know so we can discuss this with the team looking after your child.

Unless your child is too young to understand you should tell them:

- Why they are in hospital;
- That they will be given some food to eat
- That we will need to look at their skin and check their physical health by using some machines
- Encourage your child to talk about the procedure and ask questions.

We have nurses who can explain things to your child and encourage them to talk through play and appropriate communication if required.

### **What do I need to bring in with me?**

You will need to bring in the food your child will be eating on the day of the supervised feed. This should be in the form that your child is most likely to eat, e.g. for a nut supervised feed bring whole nuts, ground nuts or nut butters. Your child may not like the new flavour or consistency of the food that they are being asked to eat. It may be useful for you to bring additional foods for mixing or to be eaten alongside, e.g. fruit puree or yoghurts. You will get some information from the allergy team on what to bring in, when you get your appointment date.

As you will be spending a few hours with us, we recommend that you also bring a packed lunch and some snacks for your child.

Please also bring your child's allergy medications and any inhalers and spacers with you.

### **Your child's admission to the Children's Clinic.**

Your child will be admitted to a day case bed in the Children's Clinic. We will check your child's details and fasten an armband containing their hospital information to his or her wrist.

We will ask you some questions about your child's health to make sure that they are well enough to continue with the supervised feed. We will listen to their chest with a stethoscope and perform some observations using a monitor. We will ask you to sign

the consent form. The healthcare team looking after your child will check the emergency equipment and medication are appropriately prepared.

### **During the supervised feed**

We will ask your child to eat 1 portion of the food that they are being tested to, over 30mins. This might be divided into 3 small portions or given all at the same time. This is to mimic a normal meal time.

### **After the procedure**

We will then observe your child for 1 hour. If they are well and not showing any signs of an allergic reaction then we will do some observations before you go home. If there are any signs of an allergic reaction we will treat them accordingly.

They may have to stay longer if they have a reaction and require some treatment such as antihistamines. The nurses will continue to check your child's observations. Your child will be allowed home if there are no signs of an allergic reaction or in the unlikely event of a reaction, after it has stabilised and symptoms resolved. Very occasionally a reaction can occur between 1 hour and 24 hours after the challenge but this is exceptionally rare and we will explain to you what to do if this occurs.

We will give you some written discharge information. If your child has not shown any symptoms of an allergic reaction then we will encourage you to regularly include the tested food into their diet. If they have reacted then we will advise you to avoid that food and explain how to manage reactions.

For all patients, we will write to your GP, updating them with the outcome.

Your child will also have open access to the Riverbank Children's Ward for 24 hours after the procedure.

## **Outpatient appointments**

No follow-up is arranged after a negative supervised feed unless there are other allergies requiring management. This appointment will usually already be arranged.

## **Contact details**

If you have any specific concerns that you feel have not been answered and need explaining, please contact the following:

- Children's Clinic Worcestershire Royal Hospital (phone 01905 760588)
- The allergy team: Mobile number – 07564 848463  
Email address – wah-tr.paediatricallergy@nhs.net

## **Other information**

The following internet websites contain information that you may find useful:

- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/allergies/>

**If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, please call your GP, 111, or 999.**

### **Patient Experience**

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

### **Feedback**

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

### **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

### **How to contact PALS:**

**Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: [wah-tr.PET@nhs.net](mailto:wah-tr.PET@nhs.net)**

### **Opening times:**

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Thursday from 8.30am to 4.30pm and Friday: 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that a voicemail service is in use at busy times, but messages will be returned as quickly as possible.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.