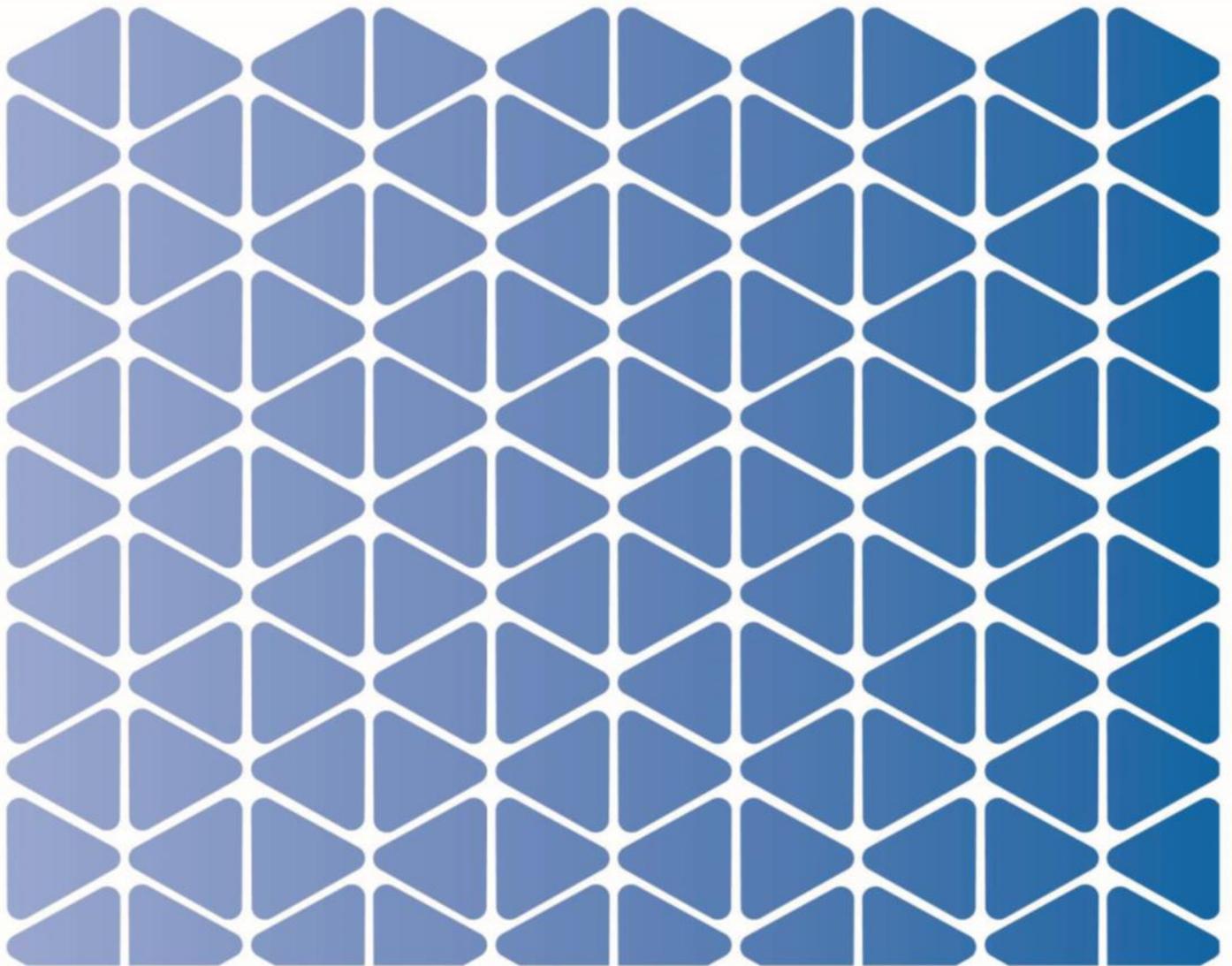




PATIENT INFORMATION

WHAT IS VIDEOFLUOROSCOPY?



Your doctor has referred you for a videofluoroscopy (video swallow) in order to look at your swallowing difficulties in detail, following the recommendation of the speech and language therapist. This leaflet is designed to give you some information about the procedure and an idea of what to expect when you attend.

What is videofluoroscopy?

Videofluoroscopy is an examination used to look at how you swallow. It aims to find out what difficulties you are having. We do this by using an x-ray video. This gives us moving x-ray images that show us a picture of your mouth, throat and food pipe whilst you are swallowing.

You will be asked to chew and swallow different varieties of food and drinks according to your identified difficulties and the images obtained will allow detailed analysis of your swallowing function.

How will this help/ what are the benefits?

A videofluoroscopy can help us find out the best way for you to swallow, provide safest textures or postures. It is helpful in addressing if and how risky eating and drinking may be, and if food or drink is going the wrong way (into your airway). Knowing this can help you make informed decisions on how to manage your difficulty in the future. It also allows your speech and language therapy team and Consultant to identify if any onward referrals to other teams are indicated.

What should I expect?

On arrival your identity will be checked and a brief discussion regarding your medical history and current swallowing difficulty will be undertaken by the consultant radiologist or advanced practitioner radiographer and speech and language therapist.

In the examination you will be asked to swallow a range of foods and drinks of different consistencies. These generally tend to be:

- A drink of contrast e.g. gastromiro or barium drink
- A yoghurt or fruit puree
- A banana or soft cake
- A biscuit

You may be trialled with a thickened drink if necessary.

If you prefer to bring in your own food you are welcome to do so but do discuss with your speech and language therapist first. Should you usually use any adaptive cutlery

or beakers please do bring these in as we want the procedure to be as close to your everyday eating and drinking experience as possible.

You may be asked to stand or sit in a series of positions to complete the examination.

The food or drink will be mixed with barium or contrast so that it will show up on the x-rays and a series of images will be taken whilst watching you swallow.

Can I bring someone to the appointment?

Due to radiation exposure, it is advocated that you attend alone. However, should you need support with your eating and drinking either due to a physical or mental health disability, please do liaise with your speech and language therapist, who will liaise with the consultant radiologist or advanced practitioner radiographer to identify if it is possible and suitable for another person to attend.

Radiology staff are not permitted to supervise children. Please make alternative arrangements for children that do not require an examination; children are not allowed to be left in the waiting room unaccompanied.

How do I prepare for this?

You should have nothing to eat or drink for an hour before your examination. This is to make sure there is not food residue within the mouth and oesophagus.

If you suffer with a dry mouth you are welcome to use any dry mouth products, or swill and spit water before the examination.

If you use a feeding tube such as an NG tube, PEG or RIG, please be aware of your appointment time and adjust the timing of your feed accordingly, to allow for 1 hour prior to your appointment of Nil by tube status.

How long does it take?

The process takes about 20 minutes.

Is the examination safe?

Any test that involves using x-rays carries a small risk, but the radiation dose for this examination is small and the radiology staff monitor the dosage during the session.

If you believe that there is a probability that you could be pregnant, please inform the department before your examination.

Please do alert the team to any allergies or intolerances you may have, particularly to iodine or specific food products, prior to the procedure.

Do I have to get undressed?

You will not need to get undressed. However, please remove any head and neck jewellery prior to your procedure. Avoid and any tops which have metal attachments such as zips or buttons around the neck or chest area or underwear with metal work e.g. underwire.

How will I feel afterwards?

You should feel well enough to go home or return to work after this examination. Your ability to drive should not be effected. There is a possibility of feeling constipated and that your faeces are white if you have been given barium. The barium usually clears from your system within 24 hours and the radiology team will provide you with further information on the day.

Please do bring and have to hand any NOK or emergency contact details, so that the videofluoroscopy team have this available, in the unlikely event that they need to contact someone to collect you.

What happens after the procedure?

You will not be told your results at the time of the procedure. Instead, the videofluoroscopy team will study the images and produce a report which will go to your Doctor and speech and language therapist. Your speech and language therapist will then arrange an appointment to see you either with or without your Doctor, and discuss the findings of the study and recommendations.

What do you do with the x-rays?

The images are saved electronically and kept securely with your hospital records for eight years on the hospital PACS system. Your report is uploaded to electronic records and sent to the referrer.

Where to find us

Worcester site: Level 1 x-ray, Worcester Royal Hospital

Kidderminster site: Level 1 x-ray, Kidderminster Treatment Centre

What if I can't attend?

Speech and language therapy: 01905 760475

Radiology appointment line: 01905 768934

If you are unable to attend this appointment, please inform us by telephoning the above number as soon as possible, Monday-Friday between 9am and 4.45pm.

Please note that if you cancel or turn down, without good reason, two suggested offers of an appointment or fail to attend any agreed appointment date, we may not be able to offer a further date. This will help us to treat other patients waiting on the list as soon as possible.

Should you require further information please contact your speech and language therapist or radiology department.

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.PALS@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.