



Video fluoroscopic Swallow Study (VFSS)

What is a videofluoroscopic swallow study?

It is a recorded x-ray test where your child swallows barium so the process of swallowing can be watched.

Video fluoroscopic swallow studies (VFSS) are an objective assessment of feeding and swallowing. This evaluation is used to address concerns regarding swallow dysfunction and aspiration (when food, liquids, saliva or other materials enter the airway) as well as feeding difficulties. It can be recommended when your child is having difficulty swallowing liquids, chokes when eating or drinking, refuses various foods, has chronic respiratory problems, has fussy eating behaviors, difficulty handling saliva and/or has gurgly breath sounds.

What can you expect from a video fluoroscopic swallow study (VFSS)?

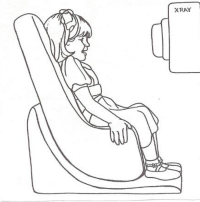
A typical visit for a VFSS is approximately 1.5 hours long and includes:

Caregiver interview: An occupational therapist and speech-language pathologist will meet with you and your child to discuss and address concerns regarding your child's feeding skills and swallow function.

Observation and radiology: You and your child will then be escorted to the radiology suite, where your child will consume foods and liquids infiltrated with barium while moving X-ray images are taken. The speech-language pathologist and occupational therapist will assess your child's feeding and swallowing skills. You will be given the opportunity to feed your child or the occupational therapist will.

You will be required to wear x-ray protection during the study. **Pregnant women and other children are not allowed in the radiology suite during the study.** If other children will be coming to the appointment, please bring another adult to supervise the children in the waiting area. No cell phones or recording of the study are allowed.

Your child will be seated in a chair that is appropriate for their age and ability to model their current way of eating to see their most typical swallowing behaviors.



Views may be taken from the side and/or the front.

Results: After the exam is completed, the team will share the evaluation results with you and your child. A brief report will

be provided before you leave with recommendations for the safest diet for your child and address any swallowing and feeding issues that may arise. A more detailed report will be available within 1-2 weeks following the evaluation and may be requested through medical records or found on the PatientConnect portal. Medical records can be reached at: **406-657-4676**.

Your child will be referred to appropriate outpatient therapy services if necessary or can continue therapy with the recommendations provided.

How do I prepare for the VFSS?

You and your child will first check in at ENT (Ear, Nose and Throat) in the clinic for the caregiver interview. Then you will be escorted to hospital radiology where the VFSS will take place. Specific instruction will be given when the appointment is made regarding time. Typically, it is recommended that children **do not eat or drink (by mouth or by feeding tube) for 2-3 hours before the appointment** so that they are hungry enough to accept foods and liquids during the study.

Caregivers should bring the following to the study:

- Cups, dishes, utensils and bottles your child uses at home.
- A small variety of different foods with different textures your child eats at home. Examples could include: purees (yogurt, applesauce, pudding), meltable solids (crackers, cookies, puffs, cereal), other table foods your child enjoys (lunch meat, bread etc.) and a few foods your child finds challenging.
- A change of clothes for your child just in case they get dirty.