Rehabilitation Services

Pediatric Video Fluoroscopy Swallow Study (VFSS).

How to schedule a Pediatric VFSS:

To schedule this procedure, the physician’s office may call and fax a prescription with a current diagnosis to:

IU Health Ball Memorial Hospital
Speech Pathology Department
2401 West University Avenue
Muncie, IN 47303
Phone: 765.747.8463
Fax: 765.741.1012

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07/07/11
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Recommendations following the VFSS.

After the VFSS, therapeutic intervention may be warranted. The recommendations will be sent to the primary care physician with a request for dysphagia therapy.

IU Health Ball Memorial Pediatric Rehabilitation Services offers individualized feeding plans that may focus on:

- Oral motor exercises for strength and coordination of oral structures.
- Pharyngeal stimulation for delayed swallow.
- Monitoring/adjusting of diet tolerance including thickened liquids and advancing diet as progress is achieved.
- Work with pediatric patients to wean from tube feedings to oral feedings.
Why is a Pediatric VFSS recommended?

A Pediatric VFSS is recommended for infants or children ages birth-13 years of age, with suspected swallowing disorders. It is used to rule out aspiration and view anatomy during swallowing in order to determine possible causes for disrupted feeding patterns.

**Clinical signs of swallowing dysfunction include:**

- Difficulty coordinating breathing with eating or drinking
- Difficulty sucking from a bottle or breast
- Choking/coughing
- Gagging
- Vomiting
- Weight loss or lack of weight gain for more than 3 months
- Failure to thrive
- Congestion during or after feeding
- Arching or stiffening body during feedings
- Feeding periods longer than 30-40 minutes
- Craniofacial anomalies
- Delay in feeding developmental milestones
- Color changes or reddening of eyes with feeding

What is a Pediatric Video Fluoroscopy Swallow Study (VFSS)?

A VFSS is a moving x-ray of an individual’s swallow that shows food and liquid passing from the oral cavity through the throat and into the esophagus while eating. The test is performed in the radiology department conducted by a Speech-Language Pathologist and a Radiologist. The infant/child is video recorded while they sit in a special support chair and may be fed by a familiar person. Age appropriate foods and liquids of different consistencies are fed via bottle, cup or spoon. A small amount of barium is added to the foods in order to view them during the procedure. The VFSS helps to view anatomy, determine the safety of oral eating/drinking, possible causes for disrupted feeding patterns and the risk of aspiration. Following the test, a plan is developed to promote the safest feeding experience, and is shared with the caregiver and primary care physician.

- Recurrent pneumonia or respiratory infections
- Frequent or lengthy colds or congestion
- Drooling beyond age 5
- Unexplained food refusal or failure to accept different textures or food
- Severe irritability or behavior during feeding
- Uninterested in feeding