

# Having a nasendoscopy to assess your swallowing

**This leaflet explains more about having a nasendoscopy, including the benefits, risks and any alternatives. It also provides information on what you can expect when you come to hospital.**

**If you have any further questions, please speak to your speech and language therapist – contact numbers are at the end of this leaflet.**

## What is a nasendoscopy?

A nasendoscopy is a procedure that allows a speech and language therapist to see your throat while you are swallowing. The procedure is sometimes referred to as a fiberoptic endoscopic evaluation of swallowing (FEES). It is usually done on the ward, at your bedside, and takes about 20 minutes. If you have an outpatient appointment for this procedure, it will usually be done in the clinic room on the Ear, nose and throat (ENT) ward.

## What happens during a nasendoscopy?

The therapist passes a small tube, called a nasendoscope, into your nostril and passes it gently backwards until it is sitting just above your soft palate and near the side and back walls of your throat. This should not be painful.

The tube has a bright light and a tiny video camera at the end. This is directed downwards so the therapist can see your throat and voice box on a screen. He/she can then watch what happens in your throat when you swallow.



Your speech and language therapist may ask you to take sips of drinks such as milk and smoothies and to try various foods to see what happens as you swallow. Liquids will be dyed blue so that they show up on the video recording. The dye is a natural food colouring used in cooking.

The procedure will show whether any food or drink goes down the wrong way (into your airway) and what happens to any food left in your throat after you swallow.

## **Why should I have a nasendoscopy?**

The nasendoscopy allows your speech and language therapist to see what happens when you swallow. They may then be able to recommend things you can do to improve your swallowing, such as your position when you eat and drink or the type of foods you should eat and drink.

## **What are the risks?**

Some people have reported a feeling of light headedness, nose bleeds, coughing and spasm of the vocal cords. These occur in less than one out of 100 people. Any effects are temporary and should not last more than a minute or two.

## **Are there any alternatives?**

There is no other way for your speech and language therapist to get this level of information.

## **Giving my consent (permission)**

We want to involve you in decisions about your care and treatment. If you decide to go ahead, you will be asked to sign a consent form. This states that you agree to have the treatment and you understand what it involves.

If you would like more information about our consent process, please speak to a member of staff caring for you.

## **How can I prepare for the procedure?**

There is nothing you need to do to prepare for this procedure.

## **Will I feel any pain?**

The tube may feel a little uncomfortable or tickle, but it should not hurt. Sometimes, if your nose is particularly narrow, the tube may be slightly more uncomfortable. If this is the case, some local anaesthetic spray can be applied around the entrance to your nose. This numbs the area so you do not feel anything. The investigation works best if you are relaxed, so your speech and language therapist will try to make the whole procedure as comfortable as possible.

## **What happens after the procedure?**

There is no recovery period or instructions that you need to follow directly after a nasendoscopy.

You may get feedback at the time of the investigation from your speech and language therapist. The investigation is recorded and your therapist will review it in more detail after the procedure.

Any further recommendations will be discussed in full with you at your next speech and language therapy session (usually within 24 hours of the nasendoscopy). A report will be put in your medical notes.

## What should I do if I have a problem?

There are no known problems related to having a nasendoscopy. If you have a question or concern, please speak to your speech and language therapist – contact numbers are below.

## Will I have a follow-up appointment?

If you are staying in hospital, the therapist will give you feedback within 24 hours of the procedure.

If you are going home after the procedure, you will be given a follow-up appointment to see the therapist within two weeks of the procedure. This will either be agreed with you on the day of the procedure or be sent to you in the post.

### Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about having a nasendoscopy to check your swallowing, please contact your speech and language therapist (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm):

**Guy's Hospital on 020 7188 6233**

**St Thomas' Hospital on 020 7188 2522**

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets)

### Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

**t:** 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

### Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

**t:** 020 7188 8801 (PALS) **e:** [pals@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@gstt.nhs.uk)

**t:** 020 7188 3514 (complaints) **e:** [complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk)

### Language and accessible support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch:

**t:** 020 7188 8815 **e:** [languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk)

### NHS 111

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

**t:** 111

### NHS Choices

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.

**w:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

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