A modified swallow study (also called a video fluoroscopic swallowing exam or an oropharyngeal motility study) is used to test your child’s ability to swallow.

A pediatric radiology team (consisting of a pediatric radiologist, a technologist, a child life specialist and a speech pathologist) is available to assist you before, during and after the procedure.

Before the Modified Swallow Study, your child will be seated in a special chair that is placed against the x-ray table. It will come close to your child but will not touch him/her.

Because the test involves x-rays, the parent will be asked to wear a lead apron. Pregnant women must step out during the test.

During the Modified Swallow Study, your child is given liquids and foods of different textures to swallow. This may include thin liquids (water) to thick liquids (milk), or thick foods (pudding).

The liquids and foods will be mixed with barium which is a white contrast that shows up on x-ray.

As your child swallows, the mouth, throat, esophagus and stomach fill with contrast, and the doctor will take more pictures.

It can take up to 60 min to complete this test because your child will be trying the different liquids and foods.

Your child will need to hold very still while the pictures are taken. Parents are encouraged to help their child stay still.

After the Modified Swallow Study

- Your child’s stool (poop) may appear white or light color 1-2 days because of the barium. This is normal.
- If your child is constipated, please encourage him/her to drink plenty of fluids
- The speech pathologist will send a report to your child’s doctor
- Call your child’s doctor if you have any questions about the results
- After the test, your child can return to normal activities
Preparation Tips

1. Explain to your child what will happen in words that he/she can understand.
2. Tell your child you will be there.
3. Explain the importance of holding still while pictures are being taken.
4. Bring with you foods of varying consistencies that your child likes to eat (smooth, chewy, crunchy).
5. Bring foods that your child has difficulty eating.
7. You may bring an item such as a blanket, or stuffed animal, to comfort your child during the test.
8. Make sure that your child is hungry but not irritable.
   - For INFANTS: Hold the last feeding before the time of the scheduled test.
   - For CHILDREN (2 yrs and older) - nothing by mouth for 4 hrs before the time of the scheduled test

One of the members of the team will be contacting you prior to the appointment to further discuss any of your needs.

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