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Micturating Cystourethrogram (MCUG)

Department of Paediatric Imaging



Information for patients, carers and family

What is an MCUG/Bladder X-ray?

MCUG or Bladder X-ray is a scan that shows how well your child's bladder works as it fills and empties. It is used to help diagnose why your child may have urinary tract infections and if there are any variations/abnormalities in your child's bladder and kidneys. The test can help to demonstrate whether any urine from the bladder passes back up to the kidneys (reflux).

Is there any preparation for the X-ray?

Your child will need double dose antibiotics for five days in a row if they are already taking the single prophylactic dose. If not, the dose will be decided by the doctor requesting the MCUG. The first dose is to be given the day before the appointment. This will help to reduce the risk of infection.

Important: *If for any reason your child has not been covered with double dose antibiotics before this procedure the appointment will need to be rescheduled.*

What will happen on the day of the examination?

You will arrive at Level 4 X-ray and Ultrasound department at the Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital.

The Consultant Radiologist will explain the whole procedure in detail beforehand and you are welcome to ask any questions you may have. Verbal consent will be obtained for the procedure to go ahead.

If you are pregnant, we suggest you bring another person with you to accompany your child throughout the procedure.

It can help if your child has a favourite toy to hold to comfort them throughout.

All underwear or nappies need to be removed once the child is in the examination room, just before the scan starts.

What will happen during the scan?

You will be able to stay with your child throughout the scan.

A Consultant Radiologist will insert a catheter (a small tube) into your child's bladder through the urethra.

Anaesthetic jelly will be applied to numb the area before insertion. This may cause slight discomfort and your child may need to be held still while this is done.

An appropriate amount of contrast (dye) will be passed through the catheter into the bladder. The dye helps us to see the bladder as it fills up and empties.

Babies and young children will naturally pee when their bladder is full. The Consultant Radiologist will take a few X-ray pictures while your child is peeing which you will be able to see on the screen.

When the examination is complete the catheter will be gently removed from your child's bladder. The procedure usually takes about 30 minutes.

How do I obtain the results?

The Consultant Radiologist will send the report to the doctor that referred your child for the MCUG. The doctor will then talk to you about the results.

Are there any risks?

Inserting the catheter into the bladder can increase the risk of an infection. Taking a course of antibiotics (or increasing the dose if your child is already taking them) can reduce this risk.

In the unlikely event that your child develops a high temperature, has discomfort when peeing or becomes unwell, please contact your family doctor (GP).

This procedure is led and delivered by Consultant Radiologists. Advances in digital equipment and specifically developed paediatric procedures enable us to use the smallest amount of x-rays possible. The benefit of having this test outweighs any potential risk caused by exposure to x-rays.

Special needs and patient preparation

If your child has any special needs or health issues you feel the doctor needs to know about, please call the Department of X-Ray and Ultrasound at Royal Alexandra Hospital before the test.

It may be helpful to let us know in advance about your child's needs or difficulties; it may be possible for a Play Specialist to be present in order to help your child stay calm and/or distract from the procedure.

Thank you.

Radiology Team

If you have any questions regarding your child's appointment or the preparation, please contact our Imaging Department on 01273 523152 between 9am and 4pm, or leave a message.

You are also able to contact us using the following email address:
bsuh.rachpaediatricimaging@nhs.net

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Disclaimer

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.

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