



Videofluoroscopy: An X-ray of Your Soft Palate Movements During Speech

North West England, the Isle of Man and North Wales
Cleft Lip and Palate Network

What is Videofluoroscopy?

Videofluoroscopy is a moving X-ray that can be recorded onto DVD. It lets us see how well your soft palate (roof of your mouth) is moving when you are talking, and whether it separates the back of your nose and mouth. The procedure is exactly the same whether you are a child or an adult.

Why do I need Videofluoroscopy?

The Speech and Language Therapist has assessed your speech and thinks that your soft palate may not be moving well enough to separate your nose from your mouth when you are speaking. The investigation gives a good view of what happens to the soft palate and throat when someone is speaking. It will help the Speech and Language Therapist and Cleft Surgeon decide with you the best way to manage your speech difficulties.

What is involved in having Videofluoroscopy?

You will go to the X-ray Department, where you will be seen by a Radiologist (a doctor who specialises in X-rays) and a Specialist Speech and Language Therapist.

You will be in the X-ray room for approximately 5-10 minutes. You will be awake for this. There are two types of X-rays:

1. Side view:

For this, you will be asked to stand up or sit on a stool. The X-ray camera will be at your side and, although it will move around you to find the best possible picture, it will not touch you. Once the camera is in the best position, you will need to keep your head very still. You will then be asked to speak. Usually, this is counting and copying specific sounds, words and sentences.



This is a picture of Gabrielle sitting next to the X-ray camera. she is speaking words into the microphone.

2. From above:

For this, you will either be asked to sit forward and lean your head forward or to lie down on a special X-ray table. A very small amount of special dye (barium) will be put into your nose and you will be asked to do a big sniff. This is to cover your palate with dye so that it shows up clearly on the X-ray. Again, you will be asked to do some counting and to copy specific sounds, words and sentences.



Here Gabrielle is lying next to the X-ray camera speaking into the microphone.

What will the X-rays be used for?

The results help to plan any future treatment you may need. Some people may benefit from an operation to improve the movement of their soft palate and/or help their palate and throat work together to separate their nose and mouth during speech. Others may require further investigations (such as nasendoscopy) to help make these decisions. Some of you may need no further treatment or investigation.

What happens next?

The Specialist Speech and Language Therapist and the Radiologist will take the DVD away to study it to see how well your soft palate and throat work together to separate your nose and mouth when you are speaking. The Speech and Language Therapist and Consultant Cleft Surgeon will look at the X-rays and discuss how to help to improve the sound of your speech. We will discuss the results and treatment suggestions with you at your next clinic appointment.

What are the risks in having Videofluoroscopy?

The risk from being exposed to radiation (X-rays) from the equipment is very small. Pregnant women and other children (including brothers and sisters) are not allowed into the X-ray room with you. If you have any concerns about this procedure please don't hesitate to call us. The numbers are on the last page of this leaflet.

Suggestions/Comments

The staff are here to help and it is important for them to know if you have any comments or suggestions about the services you have received. If you wish to speak to a member of the cleft team please telephone us:

Liverpool: 0151 252 5204
Manchester: 0161 701 9080
Monday to Friday, 9.00 am to 5.00 pm

Alternatively you can contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS):

Manchester PALS: 0161 701 8700, Monday to Friday 9.00 am to 4.00 pm. e-mail childrens.pals@cmft.nhs.uk

Liverpool PALS: 0151 252 5374/5161, Monday to Friday 9.00 am to 4.30 pm. e-mail PALS@alderhey.nhs.uk

External contacts and information

Cleft Lip and Palate Association (CLAPA)

First Floor, Green Man Tower,
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Changing Faces

The Squire Centre, 33-37 University Street,
London, WC1E 6JN
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This information is available in Welsh, if preferred.

Mae'r wybodaeth hon ar gael yn Gymraeg, pe baech yn dymuno hynny.

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