

## Radiology Department

# Water soluble swallow and/or meal

You have been advised by your doctor to have an X-ray examination of all or part of your upper gastro-intestinal tract which consists of the oesophagus (throat), stomach and duodenum (a small tube that connects your stomach to your small intestine).

This leaflet will explain what the examination involves. It may not answer all your questions, so if you have any concerns or queries, please do not hesitate to call the Radiology team on the telephone number 02476 967115

If you feel unhappy with any part of your care please ask to speak to a senior member of staff.

Please read this leaflet carefully before your appointment to ensure that you successfully prepare for the examination.

Please contact the X-ray Department if your weight is equal to or more than 138kg (21½ stone) as you may require an alternative examination.

### Points to remember

- Please bring any sprays or inhalers that you are taking with you to your appointment.
- If you are on medication from your doctor, please continue to take it as



## Patient Information

normal.

- Please leave any valuable possessions at home.

## Preparation

Do not eat or drink anything for **2 hours** before your appointment.

## What is a water soluble swallow?

- This examination requires you to swallow several mouthfuls of a colourless fluid that contains X-ray dye which shows up on X-ray images and allows us to take pictures of your oesophagus and stomach as it passes down through your upper intestinal tract.
- This examination is performed to show the structure of your upper intestinal tract or because you have problems swallowing. It is also performed as a follow-up examination after you have had a recent operation involving your oesophagus and/or stomach, to check that you have healed inside fully before you start to eat solid food.
- Your doctor should have explained the reasons why you need to have this examination.
- The examination will be performed by a radiologist (X-ray doctor) or advanced practitioner radiographer who may be assisted by a radiographer and a radiology department assistant.
- The procedure may take 10 to 30 minutes.

## Risks of the procedure

X-rays are a type of radiation. We are all exposed to natural background radiation every day of our lives. This comes from the sun, food we eat, and the ground. Exposure to X-rays carry a small risk, but your doctor feels that this risk is outweighed by the benefits of having the test. We will take precautions to minimise the number of X-rays you receive.

## Safety

**Patients aged 12 to 55, could you be pregnant?** The risks of radiation are slightly higher for the unborn child so you will be asked to confirm that you are not pregnant before the examination can proceed.

## Patient Information

### **What will happen when I arrive?**

When you arrive at the Radiology/ X-ray Department, please follow the signs for Route 2: Fluoroscopy and Intervention and report to the reception desk. You will be registered and then directed to the reception waiting area.

You will be asked to undress and put on an examination gown. Please feel free to bring your own dressing gown to wear over the X-ray gown.

### **During your examination**

You will be taken into the X-ray room where the examination will be explained to you, and you can ask any questions that you may have.

### **Water soluble swallow:**

- You will be asked to stand against the X-ray table and swallow mouthfuls of colourless liquid whilst the radiologist follows the liquid with the X-ray machine as it passes down your throat and into your stomach and duodenum.
- You may be asked to lie down on the X-ray table during the examination for further images to be taken of your stomach and duodenum.

### **After your examination**

Once the examination is complete you may go home or return to work

If you have any problems after the examination, please see your GP.

### **How do I get the results?**

The results may not be given to you immediately. They will be sent to the doctor who referred you to us for this examination.

## Other sources of information:

For information about the effects of X-ray and information about radiology departments visit the NHS website: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/X-ray/>

Please note that the views expressed in this website do not necessarily reflect the views of UHCW NHS Trust.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact the telephone number on your appointment letter or 02476 967161 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

To give feedback on this leaflet please email [feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk](mailto:feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk)

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