



MARCH 2004  
0320

## VIDEO SWALLOW STUDY

### WHAT IS A VIDEO SWALLOW STUDY?

A **video swallow study** is an x-ray to see how your child swallows. The test is videotaped so it can be reviewed if needed.

### WHY IS A VIDEO SWALLOW STUDY DONE?

The test is done to see:

- how the tongue is used to get food to the back of the throat.
- how the food is swallowed.
- if the food goes into the lungs instead of the stomach.
- if different consistencies are handled better than others.
- if different positioning helps for feeding.

### WHAT SHOULD YOU DO TO GET READY FOR THE SWALLOW STUDY?

Your child is not to have any feeding for 4-6 hours prior to the test but should get his/her medicines as usual. Not letting your child eat for 4-6 hours before the test will ensure your child is hungry at study time and will reduce the chance your child will vomit during the study.

If your child has a favorite nipple, spoon, cup or food, it is a good idea to bring these items with you for the test. You need to arrive 15 minutes **before** your scheduled time to register and meet with the therapist. The study usually takes 20 minutes, but you will be in the X-ray Department longer than that.

### HOW IS THE SWALLOW STUDY DONE?

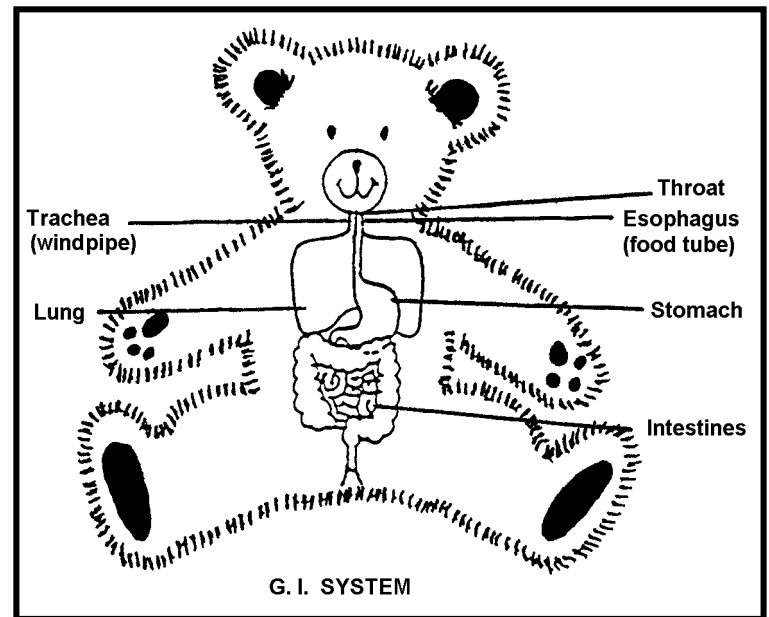
- The swallow study is done in the X-ray Department. Usually a speech pathologist or an occupational therapist, X-ray technologist, and X-ray doctor (radiologist) are present for the test. The therapist, technologist and doctor usually try to "warm up" to your child to get cooperation. However, do not be surprised if your child gets a little upset during this study.
- Your child will be given barium to swallow. Barium shows up on an x-ray so your child's swallow can be watched. Barium looks like white paste and is not very tasty, so your child may take the barium better if he/she is hungry.
- Different types of barium (thin to thick) may be tried to see which thickness your child can swallow best.
- Sometimes the barium is mixed with formula or food that your child is used to eating. This makes it easier for your child to swallow the barium. If your child refuses to take the barium, a syringe without a needle is used to put some barium in the back of the mouth. Your child may be put in different positions to see if a certain position will improve the swallowing.

**IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE LOOKED AT DURING THE STUDY?**

Sometimes the radiologist will do an additional study and watch what happens once the barium goes down to the stomach after swallowing. This is called an Upper GI Test. When this is done, the radiologist is usually looking for reflux of stomach contents back up the tube (esophagus) where it came from. Other things, such as, how fast the barium leaves the stomach and goes to the intestines can also be looked at.

**AFTER THE STUDY:**

The therapist and radiologist usually look at several swallows and then make a report of the results to your child's doctor. Your child's doctor will let you know the results and what the results mean in terms of feeding your child. Sometimes your child's doctor can be called right after the study. Other times, the doctor may call you in a day or two to go over the results.



After the study, your child can go back to a normal day's routine. Your child's bowel movements may be white from the barium for a day or so until all the barium is passed.