

Fibreoptic Endoscopic Examination of Swallowing (FEES)

YOUR APPOINTMENT

Patient's :
Name

Date :

Time :

Location :



WHAT IS A FEES?

A Fiberoptic Endoscopic Examination of Swallowing (FEES) is a procedure in which a fine flexible scope is passed through the nose to view the throat, voice box and surrounding structures while the patient is swallowing. It is recommended when the speech therapist needs more information about how you swallow.

A FEES may be used to allow the therapist to determine:

- If food and drink enter your food pipe (oesophagus) safely
- How well you are managing saliva and secretions in the throat
- If certain positions or strategies help you to swallow better



WHAT HAPPENS DURING A FEES?

A typical FEES procedure involves:

- Using nasal lubricant to allow easy insertion of the scope
- Looking at the structures and movements involved in swallowing and performing a few speech/swallow tasks (e.g. hum, say “eee”, swallow your saliva, etc.)
- Consuming different foods and drinks of varying textures and consistencies. Food dye may be added so that these can be seen clearly against the structures of swallowing
- Trying different swallowing strategies or ways of feeding

No special preparation or fasting is required for a FEES. You have to maintain alertness throughout the study. The examination usually takes 30 minutes.

Please bring along dentures and special feeding equipment that you usually use. The speech therapist may also request you to bring special foods (e.g. porridge, mashed potato) for testing during the FEES.

The speech therapist will explain the results and recommendations to you or your caregiver in another appointment. The speech therapist will use the test results to decide what treatment will help your swallowing. You and the speech therapist will discuss what foods and drinks are safest and how to eat/drink them. The results will also be conveyed to your doctor.

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF A FEES

A FEES is a safe procedure and has been recommended because the benefits outweigh the potential risks. The test will be terminated if your safety and comfort become a concern.

The speech therapist will be careful to minimise negative reactions such as discomfort, gagging and/or vomiting, and nose bleeding.

Rare complications of a FEES include:

- Allergy to food, drink and/or food dye used in the examination
- Laryngospasm — an uncontrolled tightening of the muscles at the entrance to the airway causing breathing difficulties (0.03%)
- Vasovagal response — feeling faint with the possibility of a brief loss of consciousness (0.06%)



INFORM YOUR SPEECH THERAPIST IF YOU HAVE:

- Allergies to drugs, any food, drink and/or food dye
- Previous nasal surgery or small, obstructed nasal passages
- Extremely sensitive gag reflex and previous inability to tolerate endoscopy
- History of laryngospasm and other breathing difficulties
- Unstable heart conditions
- Previous episodes of fainting and hyperventilation



If you need to change your appointment, please contact us at 6908 2222



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The information provided in this publication is meant purely for educational purposes and may not be used as a substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. You should seek the advice of your doctor or a qualified healthcare provider before starting any treatment or if you have any questions related to your health, physical fitness or medical conditions.

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