

FEES (fiberoptic endoscopic evaluation of swallowing)



What is a FEES (fiberoptic endoscopic evaluation of swallowing)?

A FEES is a test used to check how well your child swallows. During the test, your child will eat and drink something. As your child swallows, a doctor and speech pathologist will look into your child's throat with an endoscope. An endoscope is a thin, flexible tube with a light and camera attached.

What can I do to help prepare my child?

- Your child needs to be hungry for the test. Do not let them eat anything for 2 to 3 hours before the test.
- Tell the speech pathologist if your child has any allergies or if there are any foods or drinks that they have trouble swallowing.

What will the test be like?

- Your child will be awake during the test. It most often takes about 10 to 15 minutes.
- The doctor will pass the tube through your child's nose. This will let the doctor and speech pathologist look at your child's throat as they swallow.
- The speech pathologist may ask you to help during the test. You may be asked to hold, feed or talk to your child.
- Your child will eat and drink things like applesauce, pudding, juice, milk and cookie.
 - The doctor and speech pathologist will be able to see if any food or drink goes into your child's airway.
 - You and your child will be able to watch what is happening on a monitor (screen).
- The doctor will then remove the tube from your child's nose.

Are there any risks?

The most common risk is mild discomfort or pain. Other risks include:

- If your child has swallowing problems, there is a chance they may aspirate a small amount of food or drink.
 - Aspiration is when food or drink goes into the airway and lungs instead of going into the stomach.
 - The speech pathologist will work to reduce this risk during the test.
- Some children may gag when the tube goes through the nose. Rarely, this causes vomiting (throwing up).
- There is a small chance the tube may cause a nosebleed.

What happens after the test?

- The doctor will talk with you about the results.
- The doctor and speech pathologist will work with you to choose the best feeding plan for your child.

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.