

Water Soluble Contrast Swallow – A Patients Guide

What is a Water Soluble Contrast Swallow?

This test is to look at the oesophagus (gullet) whilst you are swallowing. This test aims to look for problems in the oesophagus (gullet) such as a stricture (narrowing), hiatus hernias, tumours, reflux from stomach, disorders of swallowing, etc. Your doctor will have explained why you need to have this done. The contrast shows up the outline of the oesophagus on X-ray pictures, acting like a temporary dye. The X-ray machine has a table which can tilt, with an arm coming across which delivers or detects the X-rays. Within the room there will be either a Radiologist or a Radiographer.

Before your scan

Please have **Nothing to Eat or Drink for 6 hours** prior to your examination. Please contact the department 01702 385280 if you are diabetic.

Please bring a list of any medications you are taking, and a dressing gown.

What happens when I arrive?

On arrival in the X-ray Department, you will be asked to change into a gown. Your clothes will be placed in a bag and brought with you to the examination room. When the time comes for your test, you will be taken into the X-ray Room.

What does it involve?

The Radiologist or Radiographer will talk to you about exactly what is going to happen. You will be asked to drink some watery liquid which is usually mildly flavoured and you will be asked to sip one or two mouthfuls at a time. X-ray images will be taken with you standing up and laying down. Later on in the examination you may be asked to turn over onto your stomach. If you think you will have trouble moving about on the X-ray table please tell us as soon as possible so we can make arrangements to help you.

The Radiologist may be able to tell you what the examination has shown. More often the Radiologist will want to carefully analyse the images later and provide a detailed report to the referring consultant or GP. The examination will take approximately 30 minutes.

After the examination.

You will be able to dress and leave the department. You should be able to go home as soon as the test is finished.

Further information

If you have any concerns or questions about your Swallow examination please telephone the 1st Floor X-ray Reception Desk on 01702 385280.