Tallaght University Hospital | Ospidéal Ollscoile Thamhlachta

An Academic Partner of Trinity College Dublin



Fibreoptic Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES) Information

PATIENT INFORMATION BOOKLET

Why am I having a FEES?

You have been referred for a FEES because you have had some difficulties swallowing or have had surgery/treatment that can affect your swallowing. A FEES can be useful because:

1. It is difficult to observe exactly what is happening in the throat during swallowing without seeing what is happening as you swallow. The FEES enables the SLT or the Ear Nose and Throat surgeon (when necessary) to examine the workings of your throat and your swallow in greater detail.

2. It may answer the following questions:

    a) Is food going down the wrong way?

    b) Why is it going the wrong way?

    c) How can the problem be overcome?

3. It lets the SLT try different foods/fluids and different techniques which may help you swallow more effectively.

What is a FEES?

It is a test that lets the Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) look at your throat and vocal cords, and examine your swallowing.

A thin, flexible camera will be passed through your nose and down into your throat.

It is one of a number of tests that can be used to find out why you have problems with swallowing.

What happens during a FEES?

- The procedure is usually carried out by two SLTs and/or a Doctor and takes about 10-20 minutes.
- A thin flexible camera called an “endoscope” will be placed in one of your nostrils and moved through your nose towards your throat.
- This procedure is completely safe and is not painful, however you may feel some mild discomfort.
- It is unlikely that this procedure will cause any damage or bruising to your nose or throat.
- You will be able to see your throat (including your vocal cords) on the computer screen if you choose.
- You will be given different food/drinks to swallow. These may contain some blue or green dye which makes them clearer to see in your throat as you swallow them.
- You might be asked to carry out some techniques that may help your swallow, such as tucking in your chin or holding your breath.
- You can stop the procedure at any time.
- Your procedure will be recorded so that the SLT can analyse it at a later time.

Where do I go for my FEES?

- A FEES can be carried out at the patient’s bedside or in the Speech and Language Therapy Department.
- If you are attending for an outpatient appointment, you can check in at the Check-in Kiosk in the main reception hall before going to the Speech and Language Therapy Department.

What will happen after my FEES?

- You can go home or back to the ward immediately after your appointment as it is unlikely that you will experience any side effects.
- Your SLT will be able to give you some basic feedback on your assessment immediately afterwards. Detailed results will be available after the exam has been analysed and a comprehension report will be written by the SLT.
- The report should be available for inpatients after 24 hours and for outpatients within two weeks.
- A copy of the report will be sent to whoever referred you (GP/community SLT/your consultant etc.) and a copy will be placed in your medical file.
- Your procedure will also be discussed with your doctor.
- You will likely be asked to attend another Speech and Language Therapy appointment with your primary SLT in which your results will be fed back to you and a treatment plan will be outlined if necessary.

Do I need to fast for my procedure?

No, unless you have been advised to fast by your doctor.

Any other questions?

If you have any further questions about the FEES procedure, your Speech and Language Therapist will be happy to talk through it with you.

You can speak to the SLT when you attend for appointment or alternatively you can contact us on 01-414 2776 between 8:30am-4:30pm Monday to Friday.