

Bladder function assessment (BFA)

If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to the urology nurses (details at the end of this leaflet).

What is a BFA?

A BFA (non-invasive urodynamic study) is a non-invasive test, done to examine your child's bladder behaviour. If your child is toilet trained, they will have to pee on a commode into a jug that sits on a uroflow. The uroflow is a small machine that is connected wirelessly to a computer. It records the speed and flow pattern of the urinary stream, the time it takes to pee and the amount of urine passed.

It might be necessary to apply EMG (electromyography) stickers. These are tiny, sticky electrode pads, applied to the abdomen (tummy), the hips and either side of the anus (bottom). The stickers connect to a small monitor and get information about the pelvic floor and abdominal muscles during peeing.

If your child has daytime incontinence, or is not yet toilet trained, they will wear a small body worn alarm, this will alert us to urine leakage or to when your child has peed into their nappy. The body worn alarm is worn inside the pants within a pad or inside the nappy. After the wee, a bladder scan will be done to check if any urine has been left behind.

How long will it take?

To have reliable results, your child will need to produce more than one pee on the uroflow. The number of wees needed will depend on if they represent your child's usual bladder behaviour. This can take up to 4 hours, so please plan to be at the hospital for that long. If your child is not yet toilet trained, the assessment will be 4 hours. When you arrive please try to not let your child visit the toilet until you have spoken to the nurse. It is also important that your child starts drinking well, on their way to the appointment.

What do you need to bring?

If your child is in nappies or pads, please bring a good supply with you to cover the day, and extra as more nappy changes than usual may be required. Please bring a change of underwear/clothes if your child experiences wetting. Loose comfortable clothing is advised.

Please bring some toys or form of entertainment for your child as this can be a long appointment with waiting in between pees. Your child can drink whatever they like during the assessment. If they have a favourite drink, please bring this with you. We can only provide drinking water. Your child will need to start drinking before they arrive for the appointment.

You might want to bring your own food, but there are cafes/restaurants at the hospital.

When you receive your appointment, you will also receive a bladder and bowel diary. This must be completed before your appointment. Please remember to bring it with you. Please contact us if you have any questions about completing the diary. The bladder and bowel parts both need to be completed.

Please let us know before your visit if your child has any special needs. It may be possible for a play therapist to be present during the assessment.

Where will it be done?

At the moment we do BFAs in different places, but your appointment letter will have the exact location. Please arrive on time as we are only allocated space to complete the assessments for a certain amount of time. There will also be other children having their BFA at the same time.

Coronavirus (Covid-19)

While there is social distancing guidance in place, patients and their parent/carer are in an individual room for the duration of the assessment. We ask that only one parent/carer comes with each child to reduce the number of people entering the hospital. Please try and remain in your room. Wash your hands when entering and leaving the hospital, wear your mask at all times when in the hospital unless exempt.

All staff will be wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), and strict infection control guidelines are being followed. Please contact us if you want more information.

Please note, the above is subject to change depending on Government guidance.

Are there any alternatives?

This test is the only test that collects detailed information, in a non-invasive way, about how the bladder behaves. Other tests and scans might be needed. Your consultant will discuss this with you and they will happen on another day.

Are there any risks?

There are no risks with the uroflow or bladder scan.

What happens during the BFA?

The assessment will start with the bladder nurse asking about your child's pee and poo (bladder and bowel) history. We will then review the bladder and bowel diary to give us a good idea of your child's normal pee volumes, fluid intake and any episodes of wetting. The 7-day bowel diary will help us to assess any constipation problems (please complete even if your child does not suffer from constipation). Please encourage your child to drink regularly, but not excessively, throughout the day to fill up their bladder. Your nurse will give you guidance.

Uroflowmetry and bladder scan

We will show your child the uroflow toilet before they need to use it.

When your child feels that their bladder is full, we will ask them to use the uroflow toilet. The uroflow toilet should be used in the same way as they normally use the toilet. A foot stool is also used for good positioning. Your child will be able to use the toilet with privacy.

If we are using EMG stickers, we will need to link it to the computer before your child pees. This will be explained by the nurse.

A bladder scan is done after each time your child has peed. This lets us see how well the bladder is emptying. The bladder scan needs a small amount of ultrasound gel placed on the lower abdomen while they lay on the bed. This will only take a short time.

Once all the information has been collected your child will be able to go home.

Is the test painful?

Using the uroflow, and bladder scanning are not painful. The EMG stickers, if used, may be a little uncomfortable when they are placed around the anus, but do not cause pain.

What happens after BFA?

If we have used EMG stickers they will be removed (this is not painful). If we have used a body worn alarm, this will be removed.

Will your child have a follow-up appointment?

The specialist nurse will be able to give you some feedback from the BFA. A full report will also be sent to you, your GP and consultant. A follow-up appointment with your consultant will be arranged to discuss the results in more detail. This will be sent to you via post or text message.

Contact Us

If you have any concerns about the BFA, please contact the urology nursing team, **tel:** 020 7188 4592, Monday to Friday, 9am -5pm. You can contact the urology nursing team using the paging system Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm. Please **tel:** 0844 822 2888 and give the operator pager number 822488 and leave a message. Please give your name and telephone number and you will be contacted as soon as possible.

Out of hours: call Beach Ward, **tel:** 020 7188 8844

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit **web:** www.evelinalondon.nhs.uk/leaflets

Evelina London Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's medicines, please speak to the staff caring for them or contact our helpline.

tel: 020 7188 3003, Monday to Friday, 10am-5pm, **email:** letstalkmedicines@gstt.nhs.uk

Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline, **tel:** 020 7188 8748, Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm,

email: mymedicines@gstt.nhs.uk



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