

# Your child's loopogram

**The aim of this leaflet is to help answer some of the questions you may have about your child having a loopogram. It explains the benefits, risks and alternatives of the procedure as well as what you can expect when you come to the Evelina London Children's Hospital (ELCH). If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to a doctor, radiographer or nurse caring for your child.**

## What is a loopogram?

A loopogram is an examination of an area of small or large bowel that has been connected to the skin surface. To perform the test we will be using a soft flexible catheter (a thin tube) which will be very gently inserted through the opening (stoma). The catheter has a lubricant coating to reduce discomfort. A liquid called 'contrast' that shows up on our X-ray images will be passed through the catheter while X-rays are taken to view your child's insides and see how they are functioning.

The procedure is carried out by both a radiologist (a doctor who uses X-rays to diagnose and treat illnesses) and a radiographer (a health professional that produces the images used to diagnose and treat illnesses).

The procedure is called 'fluoroscopic imaging' or 'fluoroscopy' and uses X-rays to view images in real time. When the bowel is coated with the contrast, the radiologist is able to check how it looks and how well it is working.

## Why should my child have a loopogram?

A loopogram makes it possible to see internal organs in motion, so it can provide information that will help the doctor to make a correct diagnosis or decision about your child's treatment.

## What are the risks?

All X-ray examinations involve exposure to radiation in varying amounts. The length of time and level of exposure to radiation from X-rays in medical examinations is strictly controlled and kept to the minimum that is possible. The doses that are used in medical X-rays are very low and are thought to be very safe. They are similar in strength to other sources of natural radiation that people are exposed to every day, like radiation from the sun and other stars.

The examination takes place in our children's fluoroscopy room that is designed specifically for children and young people, and offers very low dose radiation imaging.

## Are there any alternatives?

This depends on what your child is being examined for. The team looking after your child will assess which method of examination is most appropriate. Each request is also carefully assessed by the imaging team to ensure the most appropriate examination is carried out. If you have any questions please speak to the team who referred your child.

## How can my child prepare for a loopogram?

To ensure high-quality images, it is important that your child's stomach is empty for this examination. Therefore we ask that you do not feed your child before the appointment for the times stated below.

**Children aged one or over:** Do not eat or drink anything for **two hours** before the appointment.

**Children under one year:** Do not feed for **one hour** before the appointment.

If your child wears nappies or pads, please bring a spare so that this can be put on following the examination if necessary.

Metal objects can affect the image, so please avoid dressing your child in clothing with poppers or zips. No other special preparation is required.

Older children may be asked to wear a hospital gown during the exam and to remove jewellery, glasses and any clothing that contains metal.

We have a selection of DVDs to help distract your child during the examination. Or you can bring a favourite toy with you, or they may prefer to watch something on your phone or tablet. There is poor signal in the room and so it's best to download content beforehand.

If your child has a gastrostomy or a PEG tube, please bring the connector with you. If they have a stoma bag, please bring a spare one with you.

## Consent - asking for your consent

We want to involve you in all the decisions about your child's care and treatment. You will be asked if you consent to the procedure when you are called into the fluoroscopy room. If you do consent, this verbally confirms that you agree to your child having the examination and that you understand what it involves.

If you would like more information about our consent process, please speak to a member of staff caring for your child.

If on the day of the loopogram you still have questions or concerns, please ask the radiographer and/or the radiologist that is going to do the examination.

## Who can I expect in the room?

During the examination there will be a radiologist and a radiographer in the room. Sometimes a nurse can also be present, as well as a play specialist, which may be helpful for your child and the examination being performed.

## What happens before a loopogram?

As the imaging involves the use of X-rays, we legally have to ask anyone with child bearing potential over the age of 12 whether there is any chance they could be pregnant. To do this we will provide a simple question sheet when you book in at the imaging reception. This will be checked by the radiographer undertaking the examination.

## What happens during a loopogram?

The examination takes place in our children's fluoroscopy room that is located in the Children's Imaging Department. The radiographer will explain what will happen during the examination and then help your child into whichever position is best for the imaging. As a parent or carer you may be asked by the radiographer to support or hold your child in a particular position (this depends on their age). If this assistance is required, you will be asked to wear a lead coat to protect you from the radiation. If there is any chance that you could be pregnant, please notify the radiographer before the examination begins. If you are pregnant, we advise you to bring another family member with you to act as a supporter.

A loopogram involves passing a flexible tube into the intestines via the opening on the skin surface (stoma). Part of the intestines is then filled via the catheter with a warm liquid that is visible on the X-ray images. A number of X-ray images will then be taken to view and assess the area under investigation.

## Will my child feel any pain?

The antiseptic wash used to clean and prepare the area under investigation may feel cold, but your child should not experience any pain or discomfort during this examination.

## What happens after the procedure?

You and your child will be able to leave the department straight after the examination.

## What does my child need to do after we go home?

There is nothing that you need to do when you go home. Your child can eat and drink as normal and resume normal activities.

## Will my child have a follow-up appointment?

Your child may already have an appointment with the team who referred them. If not, you may wish to contact them to discuss the results of this test.

## Useful sources of information

### Contact us

Contact the Children's Imaging Department if you have any questions, **phone:** 020 7188 9218, or visit our website, **w:** [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk) or [www.evelinalondon.nhs.uk](http://www.evelinalondon.nhs.uk)

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

**t:** 020 7188 3003 10am to 5pm, Monday to Friday      **e:** [letstalkmedicines@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:letstalkmedicines@gstt.nhs.uk)

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