Aerodigestive Clinic

What to expect during your visit

Welcome to the Aerodigestive Clinic. We want to make your clinic visit go as smoothly as possible, and we want to help prepare you for what to expect. Here are answers to some questions that you might have about our clinic.

What is the Aerodigestive Clinic?
The Aerodigestive Clinic treats children and adolescents with complex upper airway, breathing and digestive tract disorders.

The Aerodigestive team provides coordinated care with otolaryngology, pulmonary, nutrition and speech language pathology providers.

Who will see my child?

- Otolaryngology provider (ear, nose and throat doctor or specialized nurse practitioner)
- Pulmonary provider (lung specialist doctor or specialized nurse practitioner)
- Speech and language pathologist (evaluates feeding and swallowing)
- Nutritionist (registered dietitian)
- Audiologist (hearing specialist), if needed

How long is a clinic visit?
The length of your visit depends on your family’s needs, the number of providers your child needs to see and tests your child may need.

Most visits last 1 to 3 hours. Please bring books, toys and snacks with you.

What can I expect during a clinic visit?

1. **Answer questions and provide medical history.** Your child will see a team of experts who will ask you and your child questions about their medical history. They also will examine your child, schedule or do necessary tests, and answer questions.

2. **Tests.** There may be tests we need to do right away or others we may need to schedule for another time. Tests that same day may include:
   - A hearing test
   - An X-ray of the neck or chest
   - Lung function tests
   - Ventilator testing
   - Flexible fiberoptic laryngoscopy (See definition on left)
   - Fiberoptic endoscopic evaluation of swallowing (See definition on left)
   - Videofluoroscopic swallowing study (VFSS) (See definition on left)
   - Clinical feeding exam (Most patients will have a feeding exam. Please see information below on what to expect and how to prepare.)

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**Flexible Fiberoptic Laryngoscopy**

A small flexible telescope goes through the nose to evaluate the throat and voice box. This is brief and is done while awake during the clinic visit.

**Fiberoptic Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES)**

We insert a thin flexible telescope into the nose while your child is feeding to look at the throat while swallowing.

**Videofluoroscopic Swallowing Study (VFSS)**

A test to look at how your child swallows foods and liquids. We make an X-ray “movie” of your child’s mouth and throat while they are drinking and eating.
3. **Plan of care and next steps.** At the end of your visit, we will give you a copy of our recommendations for your child’s plan of care. We will talk about your child’s results with other providers on the care team at our team meeting. If we recommend changes to the care plan, we will call you to talk about them.

**How do I prepare for the Clinical Feeding Exam?**

- Make sure your child comes hungry.
- Continue any medications your child is taking.
- Bring a familiar cup, bottle or other special feeding items your child uses at home.
- Bring familiar food and drinks so we can observe what your child typically eats. If your child has difficulty with certain foods/textures, please bring one of these.
- Come prepared to talk about your child’s daily eating and drinking habits, routines, and schedule. If possible, bring a 2- to 3-day food diary.

**What should I bring?**

- Clinic notes or reports about operations done outside of Children’s
- Your child’s medicines and medical equipment
- Forms that providers need to sign, like school forms
- Imaging or study results done outside of Children’s, like X-rays, swallow studies, sleep studies, growth charts, reports of blood work or other tests
- Food diary, cup or bottle, and food and drink listed above for the “Clinical Feeding Exam”

To learn more about how to prepare for a clinic visit, hospital amenities and family support services, visit [www.seattlechildrens.org/patients-families/](http://www.seattlechildrens.org/patients-families/)