

# Fact Sheet

## Micturating Cysto Urethrogram (MCU)

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### What is a cystogram (MCU)?

MCU is a test that makes it possible to look at your child's bladder using contrast liquid under x-ray.

### What is contrast?

Contrast is a clear liquid containing radiopaque substance which makes the bladder and kidneys easier to see. All the contrast passes out of the body very quickly in the urine.

### What happens in MCU examination?

Your child is to have MCU and we would like to explain this examination to you.

The MCU is a test carried out in the Medical Imaging Department at The Children's Hospital at Westmead. In this examination, a series of X-Ray's are taken of your child's bladder and kidneys.

The test is performed in a room with an X-Ray table and a large camera above it. The camera is linked to a television screen where an X-Ray image of the bladder, kidneys and ureter can be observed.

The nurse will lay your child on the table and you are asked to stand at the top of the X-Ray table and hold his/her hands. The doctor will clean your child's groin with antiseptic solution. Local anaesthetic gel is placed on the end of a tiny plastic tube, called a catheter, or the anaesthetic gel is injected into the penis. The tip of the catheter is passed into the bladder. This makes her/him feel a little discomfort and

may upset your child. It is important that you reassure and comfort your child.

The catheter is then connected to the bag of contrast liquid, which is hung by the side of the table. As the bladder fills, the contrast liquid makes the bladder look like a black balloon. This is watched on the TV screen and a series of X-Ray films are taken in different positions. Once the bladder is full, X-Ray images of the kidneys and bladder are taken. Pictures are also taken as it empties. The filling up and emptying of the bladder will be repeated during the examination.

Special nappies are placed under the child while he/she is emptying his/her bladder. It is important that you explain to them that they pass urine on the table. However, a urinary bottle or bedpan will be given to the toilet-trained or older child.

As the contrast fluid flows out of the bladder, the tube will be taken out without your child noticing. Once the bladder is empty the test is finished and your child will be cleaned and dressed. The doctor checks the pictures and the examination is complete.

### Advice for parents

- If your child has a cardiac condition, please ask your cardiologist for the correct antibiotic cover.
- It is very important that your child is not suffering from a urinary tract infection for the **4 weeks** prior to the test.

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- Your child should take **antibiotics** before and after the examination according to the doctor's instructions.
- Encourage your child to drink plenty of fluids for **24 hours after the test** so as to flush the bladder.
- Your child may be a little sore when they go to the toilet for the rest of the day, but this sensation will go away quickly.
- Urine might be bloodstained in the **24 hours** following the test, but it will return to normal.
- If your child is unwell, such as a fever, continuous bloodstained urine or blood clot, you should take your child to see your GP or attend The Children's Hospital at Westmead Emergency Department.

### Remember

- Your child will feel more comfortable if a parent or carer stays with them during the examination.
- Women who are pregnant should not stay in the room while the X-Rays are being taken.
- Other children under 18 years can not stay in the X-ray room.

This fact sheet is for education purposes only.  
Please consult with your doctor or other health professional  
to make sure this information is right for your child.

*This document was reviewed on Thursday, 29<sup>th</sup> May 2008.*

the  
children's  
hospital at Westmead

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