



Pediatric -Aspiration Scan –Salivagram

What is a salivagram?

A salivagram is a diagnostic nuclear medicine test that shows the flow of saliva from the mouth through the esophagus and stomach.

During the salivagram, a tiny drop of a radiopharmaceutical will be placed on your child's tongue and allowed to mix with saliva. A special camera, called a gamma camera, will take pictures of the radiopharmaceutical/saliva mixture as your child swallows and it moves through the esophagus and stomach. If any saliva is going into the lungs, it will show up on the pictures.

When might a salivagram be needed?

A salivagram can help assess if any saliva is going into your child's lungs.

How should I prepare my child for a salivagram?

There is no special preparation for this test.

- It is helpful to give your child a simple explanation as to why the salivagram is needed and assure him/her that you will be with them for the entire time.
- You may want to bring your child's favorite book, toy or comforting object to use during the imaging part of the procedure.
- We have various DVDs to choose from for your child to watch during the test or you can bring one from home.

What should I expect when I bring my child to the clinic for a salivagram?

When you arrive, please go to the front desk. A clinic coordinator will check in your child and verify his/ her registration information.

What happens during a salivagram?

- You will be greeted by one of our nuclear medicine technologists who will explain to you and your child what will happen during the study.
- Your child will be asked to lay flat on their back on the imaging table.
- A tiny drop of the radiopharmaceutical will be placed on your child's tongue and allowed to mix with saliva. The radiopharmaceutical is tasteless and odorless.
- Imaging will begin and continue for one hour.
- It is important that your child remains as still as possible to obtain the best quality images.

Will my child feel anything during a salivagram?

Although the camera may appear large and intimidating, it does not touch your child.

Is a salivagram safe?

We are committed to ensuring that your child receives the smallest radiation dose needed to obtain the desired result.

- Nuclear medicine has been used on babies and children for more than 40 years with no known adverse effects from the low doses employed.
- The radiopharmaceutical contains a very tiny amount of radioactive molecules. We believe that the benefit to your child's health outweighs potential radiation risk.
- The camera used to obtain the images does not produce any radiation.
- It is safe to be in the imaging room during the test if you are pregnant or nursing.

What happens after the salivagram?

Once the scan is complete, the images will be evaluated for quality. If the scan is adequate, your child will be free to leave and resume normal activity. One of the Children's nuclear medicine physicians will review your child's images and create a report of the findings and diagnosis.

How do I learn the results of the salivagram?

The nuclear medicine physician will provide a report to the doctor who ordered your child's salivagram. Your child's doctor will then discuss the results with you.