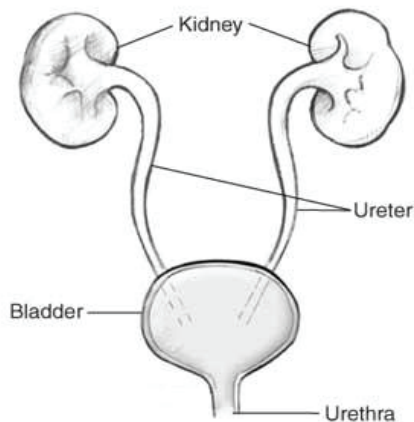


Nuclear Cystogram

What is a Nuclear Cystogram?

Note: Child-friendly language in green.

- A Nuclear Cystogram is a nuclear medicine study of your child's bladder and the tubes—ureters and urethra— connected to it.
- In nuclear medicine studies, patients are given a very small amount of radioisotopes (picture medicine), which travel to the part of the body the doctors want to see.
- In this study, these radioisotopes are used by a large gamma camera to create pictures of your child's bladder.



What can I do to help my child?

- Parents/caregivers are strongly encouraged to stay with their child throughout the entire procedure whenever possible. You are the most important thing to your child. Your presence and reassurance will help them feel more safe and secure.



Patient and Nuclear Medicine Technologist

Why is it done?

- It checks for a possible cause of urinary tract infection (UTI) called Vesicoureteral Reflux (VUR).
- Typically, urine (pee) is produced in the kidneys, flows down the ureters to the bladder, and comes out when your child urinates. VUR occurs when urine flows backwards from the bladder towards the kidneys.



Patient on Nuclear Medicine Camera Bed

What should I expect during the procedure?

The entire test takes about 30 minutes and is done in three stages.

Stage 1: Getting Ready

- For a Nuclear Cystogram, your child will be given a small amount of radioisotopes through a catheter (tiny, soft tube) gently inserted into his or her bladder.
- To get ready for the catheter, your child will be asked to remove his or her clothes and underwear, put on a hospital gown (special picture outfit), and lie down on the camera bed.
 - * Infants and young children may be wrapped in blankets to help them lie still.
- The nurse or the radiologist will then use cotton balls and betadine (brown soap) to wash where your child urinates (pees).
 - * Some kids say this part feels cold and wet.
 - * Girls will be asked to make “frog legs” (feet together, knees apart while lying down) to help the nurse see the area to be cleaned. Practicing making “frog legs” at home can make this part easier.
- Then, the nurse or the radiologist (picture doctor) will gently insert the catheter into your child’s urethra (the opening where your child’s urine comes out) and into the bladder.
 - * Your child may feel a sense of pressure and/or the urge to urinate.
 - * Encourage your child to take deep breaths to help make this part easier and quicker.

Stage 2: Pictures

- Next, the bed will be moved into position over the camera and your child will need to lie still. A technologist (person who helps take the pictures) will insert the radioisotopes (picture medicine) into the catheter, and then your child’s bladder will be filled with saline fluid flowing through the catheter.
 - * As the saline fluid (special water) fills the bladder, your child may feel the urge to urinate, but will be asked to hold it as long as he or she can—more deep breaths can help.
 - * Potty-trained children will need to tell the technologist when he or she cannot hold it anymore.

Stage 3: Going to the bathroom

- Depending on age and gender, your child will be helped to sit up on a bedpan or use a urinal (special hospital potty/toilet) to pee in. If your child is not toilet-trained, he or she will urinate while lying down with a diaper on.
- After all the pictures are taken, the technologist will gently slide out the catheter. You can help your child wash and get dressed.
- Results will be sent to your doctor in 1-2 business days.



Radiology Nursing Staff

Note: Please ask us about planning your child’s Cystogram with mild oral sedation (3 years and older)

Tips for preparing your child for a Nuclear Cystogram



Infants (0-12 months old):

- Remember you are the most important thing to your child. Your presence will help them feel as safe and secure as possible.
- Take care of yourself too. If you are prepared mentally and physically, you will be more relaxed around your child.
- Bring familiar objects that comfort your child such as a favorite blanket, toy or pacifier.
- Remember that children use many different ways to cope. Crying is a healthy and normal way for children to cope because it allows them to express their emotions.

Toddlers (1-3 years old):

- Begin preparing your child the day before.
- Let your child know that he or she will have special pictures taken, so the doctor can learn about his or her body.
- Let your child know that a doctor or nurse will be touching the area where they go pee, and that it is okay.
- Reassure your child that you will be close.
- Bring comfort items with you that help your child feel safe, such as a favorite toy or blanket.
- Toddlers are learning to be independent and make their own choices; offer them realistic choices. For example, “What stuffed animal should we bring?”

Preschoolers (3-5 years old):

- Begin preparing your child about 1-3 days in advance.
- Talk to your child about why they are having pictures taken. For example, “The doctor wants to take special pictures of the part of your body that helps you go to the bathroom.”
- Let your child know that to help them get ready for the pictures, a nurse will gently place a tiny, soft tube into the opening where they go pee.
- Talk about ways to make the “tube” part easier, such as pretending to blow out birthday candles, counting, or watching a movie.
- Let your child know they will be asked to go to the bathroom in a special potty.
- Encourage your child to ask questions.

School Age and Up (6 years old and Up):

- Prepare your child at least a few days in advance.
- Talk to your child about why the doctor wants to take special pictures of inside his or her body. For example, for younger children, “So the doctor can learn more about how your body works.” For older children, “So the doctor can see if you have reflux.”
- Explain to your child what he or she might see, hear and feel, in the order things will occur, using child-friendly and/or real terms depending on your child’s age/preference.
- Talk to your child about different ways to cope. Some children like to know everything that is happening, and some want to direct their attention elsewhere. Remind them that either way is okay.
- Encourage your child/teen to ask questions.

My questions for the Radiology staff ...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Child Life

Children's National Medical Center Department of Radiology is staffed with two full-time Child Life Specialists at Children's National Medical Center Main Campus. Child Life Specialists are trained to address the emotional and developmental needs of children and their families during healthcare experiences, and can provide procedural preparation and support before and during your child's exam.

Phone Numbers

- If you would like to speak to a Child Life Specialist before your child's Radiology appointment at Children's National Medical Center Main Campus, please call **202-476-3338**.
- For more information about hospital-wide Child Life Services at Children's National Medical Center, please call **202-476-3070**.

Children's National Medical Center supports the Image Gently campaign and strives to keep radiation exposure to our patients as low as possible. For more information on this campaign, please visit www.imagegently.org