

What happens after the examination:

One of the Radiographers will ask a Consultant Radiologist (specialist X-ray doctor) to check all of the X-ray images. The Radiologist may ask for some more X-rays to be performed, as they may want to see some bones from different angles.

When the examination is complete, your child will return to the Children's Unit. Once the Radiologist has reviewed the X-ray they will speak to the doctor looking after your child and they will then discuss the findings from the survey.

Your child can eat, drink and play as normal, once the examination is complete as long as there are other reasons why this would not be possible .

You will also receive an appointment for a follow up examination. This examination is shorter and takes place between 10-14 days after the first skeletal survey.

The results of the X-ray examination will be sent to the Consultant Paediatrician looking after your child.

They will inform you of the outcome, as soon as these results become available. If you have not heard from the Consultant after two to three weeks, please contact their secretary via the Great Western Hospital switchboard. **01793 604020, Monday – Friday 9:00am – 5:00pm.**

Further Information

NHS Website: Radiation

www.nhs.uk/conditions/Radiation/Pages/Introduction.aspx GOV UK –

Radiation: risks from low levels of radiation.2008

www.gov.uk/government/collections/radiation-risks-from-low-levels-of-ionising-radiation

Remember if you have any further questions about the test please ask the doctor caring for your child.

This information sheet is available to order in other languages and formats. If you would like a copy, please contact us on 01793 604031 or email gwh.pals@nhs.net

Document Control

Division: Women & Children's
Department: GWH Paediatric & Radiology Teams
Approved Date: 6 January 2020
Next Review Date: February 2023
Document Number: W&C - PIL0092



Skeletal Survey Information Leaflet



Skeletal Survey Information Leaflet

This leaflet is designed to provide you with more information regarding your child's skeletal survey examination. This will not replace a conversation between you and the doctor looking after your child.

What is a skeletal survey?

A skeletal survey is a set of x-rays of all the bones in the body. It involves taking about 24 small X-rays of different parts of the body, not just one big X-ray of the whole body.

Why is my child having a skeletal survey?

A skeletal survey is performed to look for any abnormality or injury to the bones. The doctor looking after your child will explain why this investigation is needed.

The survey is usually done alongside other tests.

In younger children and babies, injuries can be difficult to find. For example, bruising on the surface of the brain can occur without any apparent injury to the outside of the head. Similarly, bones may be broken without any obvious external signs X-rays and scans can help to diagnose these injuries.

Where is the skeletal survey done?

The skeletal survey is performed in the X-ray Department.

In addition a 'computed tomography' (CT) head scan may be required to check for any possible internal injury.

What happens during a skeletal survey

One of the nurses or health care support workers will take you and your child to the X-ray Department.

You will be met by the people from the X-ray team (Radiographers) who will take the pictures.

To get a clear picture, it is important to get your child to be as still as possible and so they will need to be held quite firmly for a few seconds whilst each X-ray is taken. Generally the nurse will hold your child but it is helpful for you to also help soothe and comfort your child. We like to try and involve the parents as much as possible.

Having the X-ray does not hurt, but some children can get upset because they do not like being held still. It is a good idea to bring a feed, dummy or a toy along to help settle your child if needed.

How long will it take?

It will take about 45 minutes to an hour for all the x-rays to be taken. The X-rays then need to be checked by one of the X-ray doctors (Radiologist) to see if they are happy that they can see all the bones clearly. They sometimes ask for some more X-rays to be taken before your child goes back to the ward.

How much radiation is there in a skeletal survey?

The amount of radiation from a skeletal survey is about the same as four to eight months background radiation.

Background radiation is the very low dose of radiation we are all exposed to naturally from the earth. If you would like to discuss this further, please ask the doctor looking after your child.

Can I stay with my child at all times?

Generally, those with parental responsibility are able to stay in the room with their child during the X-rays and examinations.

If you are pregnant, or could be pregnant, you must tell the Radiographer. You will not be allowed to hold your child in this case because we don't want your un-born baby to be exposed to an unnecessary X-ray.

How will you get the results of the skeletal survey?

The doctor looking after your child will explain when the results are likely to be available and discuss the best way to let you know the results.

Will my child need any of the X-rays to be repeated?

Sometimes recent injuries are not visible initially and will only be seen on images obtained later. The skeletal survey examination is not complete until a shorter second series of images has been taken. We usually repeat the chest x-rays about 10-14 days after the first full skeletal survey.

Other X-rays may need to be repeated as well but your child's doctor will explain if this is necessary.

You will be given an appointment to bring your child back for these images.