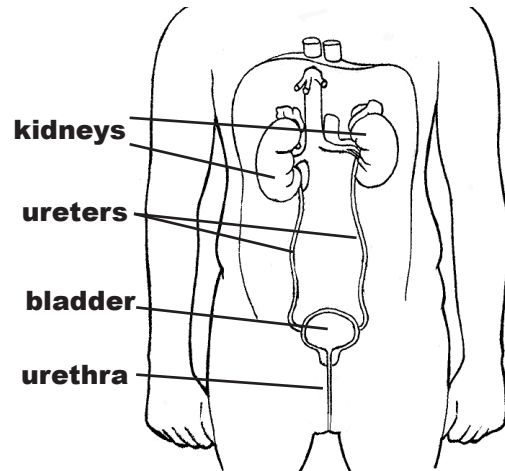


Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# VCUG or Voiding Cystourethrogram

## What is it?

Urine is made in the **kidneys**, then is carried down tubes (**ureters**) to the **bladder**. The urine is carried from the bladder to outside the body through a tube called the **urethra**. The VCUG test is an x-ray that lets the doctor see the tubes to and from the bladder.



**Urine is made in the kidneys,  
flows to the bladder,  
and is carried out of the body  
through the urethra.**

## Why is this done?

This test may be done if your child has had several infections of the urinary tract.

Sometimes, the bladder doesn't work right, and the urine flows back into the kidneys. This problem is called **vesicoureteral reflux**. Children who have this can get infections and fevers. If it is not treated, it can hurt the kidneys. This VCUG test lets the doctor see if your child has this problem.

This test can also tell if there is a problem with the nerves in your child's bladder (**neurogenic bladder**), or if there are tiny pockets in the bladder (**diverticula**).

## Before the test

We need a consent signed by the parent or guardian to do this test.

Your child will have this test at (time) \_\_\_\_\_ AM/ PM on (date) \_\_\_\_\_.

If your child is old enough to understand, explain to your child what will happen. Do this when you think the time is right. Children do best when they are told what they will see, feel and hear during the test. Your child will feel pushing in the area where urine comes out for less than one minute. If you want a Child Life Specialist to help get your child ready for this test, ask your nurse or doctor.

Some children are more comfortable with a special toy. Your child may bring that special stuffed animal, doll or blanket to the test.

Before the test we will ask you for your child's medical history, and what medicines your child is taking.

Some things we need to know include:

- If your child has a heart murmur or a heart problem.
- If your child has a problem with blood clotting.
- If your child is allergic to shellfish (such as shrimp or scallops), iodine, or the dyes used in other medical tests.
- If there's anything else you think we need to know about your child before the test.



**Your child may bring a special stuffed animal, doll or blanket to the test.**

If you have questions, write them down as you think of them. You may ask the nurse or doctor questions before the test.

yes  no Your child may eat and drink, like usual, before the test.

yes  no If your child will be given medicine to be relaxed for the test.

yes  no Your child should have nothing to eat or drink for \_\_\_\_\_ hours before the test.

It may take 1-1/2 hours from the time you check in for the test to the time you leave. The test takes between 30 to 45 minutes.

## During the test

You may stay with your child during the test, unless you are pregnant. One adult can stay in the room with the child.

The test is done in a special room with an x-ray machine. Your child will wear a hospital gown, so his or her clothes don't get wet. Your child will lie down on the table. Your child may be swaddled on a special board with padded straps that stay in place with Velcro. This will help your child stay still, make the test shorter, and get the best pictures.

Your child's feet will be pulled up close to his or her body, with knees sticking out like a frog. The radiology technologist will wash between your child's legs with cotton and special soap. It may feel wet and cold.

Then the radiology technologist will slide a small tube (called a catheter) into your child's urethra. Your child will feel pressure. The more your child can relax and hold still, the easier this will be. Once the tube is in, the pressure stops. The tube will be taped to your child's leg, so it doesn't fall out.

The urine in the bladder will flow out through the tube. When the bladder is empty, the VCUG test will begin.

The doctor will then put special water (contrast) into the tube, to fill your child's bladder. This contrast will make your child's bladder show up clearly on the x-ray. Your child will then feel like he or she has to go to the bathroom. The doctor will close off the catheter so the contrast doesn't flow out.

The x-ray machine will come closer, but not touch your child. Your child will have to stay very still while the x-rays are being taken. Pictures will be taken from different sides, so your child will change position during the test.

The x-ray machine will make a low humming sound as it takes pictures.

Then the doctor will tell your child to pee, the child will pee through the catheter, then the doctor will take out the catheter. X-rays will be taken of your child's bladder and urethra as the bladder empties on to towels, into a bottle, or on a special potty chair.

## After the test

After the test your child can get dressed.

Most children are comfortable after this test. Infants go back to their normal behaviors.

Your child may feel a little sore the next few times going to the bathroom. This will get better soon.

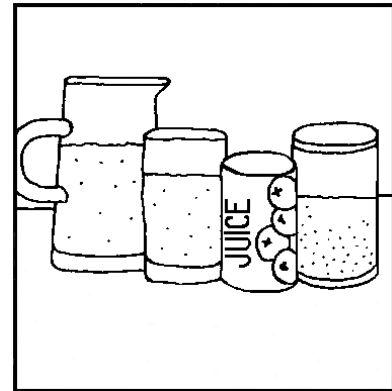
Your child should drink more fluids than usual for the next 24 hours. This will help the soreness stop, and rinse out any contrast left in the bladder.

Drink lots of fluids to reduce burning on urination and to flush out any residual contrast. The nurse will check the time, color, and volume of your urination.

The doctor will tell you when to expect to get the results of the test.

## Now that you've read this:

Tell your nurse or doctor how you will get your child ready for this test. (Check when done.)



**Your child should drink more fluids than usual for the next 24 hours.**



If you have any questions or concerns,  
 call your child's doctor or  call \_\_\_\_\_

If you want to know more about child health and illness,  
visit our library at The Emily Center at Phoenix Children's Hospital  
1919 East Thomas Road  
Phoenix, AZ 85016  
602-546-1400  
866-933-6459  
[www.phoenixchildrens.com](http://www.phoenixchildrens.com)

**Disclaimer**

The information provided at this site is intended to be general information, and is provided for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of examination, treatment, or consultation with a physician. Phoenix Children's Hospital urges you to contact your physician with any questions you may have about a medical condition.

Tuesday, January 3, 2012 • DRAFT to family review  
#783 • Written by Fran London, MS, RN • Illustrated by Dennis Swain



# The Emily Center

## VCUG or Voiding Cystourethrogram

Diagnostic Test/Exam  
Si usted desea esta información en español,  
por favor pídasela a su enfermero o doctor.

Name of Health Care Provider: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: 783  
For office use: Date returned: \_\_\_\_\_  db  nb

## Family Review of Handout

**Health care providers:** Please teach families with this handout.

**Families:** Please let us know what you think of this handout.

Would you say this handout is hard to read?  Yes  No

easy to read?  Yes  No

Please circle the parts of the handout that were hard to understand.

Would you say this handout is interesting to read?  Yes  No

Why or why not?

Would you do anything differently after reading  
this handout?  Yes  No

If yes, what?

After reading this handout, do you have any  
questions about the subject?  Yes  No

If yes, what?

Is there anything you don't like about the drawings?

Yes  No

If yes, what?

What changes would you make in this handout to make it better or easier to understand?

Please return your review of this handout to your nurse or doctor or send it to the address below.

Fran London, MS, RN  
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The Emily Center  
Phoenix Children's Hospital  
1919 East Thomas Road  
Phoenix, AZ 85016-7710

602-546-1395

[flondon@phoenixchildrens.com](mailto:flondon@phoenixchildrens.com)

**Thank you for helping us!**