

**The Child Protection Medical Examination**

Why has my child been referred for a Child Protection Medical Examination:

Your child has been referred for a Child protection medical examination because concerns have been raised about the possibility of child abuse or neglect. All professionals who work with children must act on any concerns they have about the safety or welfare of a child or young person. You should have been informed what the concerns are. If you haven’t been, then ask. The examination will be carried out by a senior children’s doctor (paediatrician). The child protection medical examination will take place in a private area away from other patients and families usually in a clinic room or a cubicle (single room on the ward).

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**Wye Valley NHS Trust www.wyevalley.nhs.uk**   
**Telephone 01432 355444**

Investigations

If your child is under 2 years of age and there are concerns regarding possible non-accidental injury further investigations may be needed (sometimes they are also needed in children over 2 years of age). If further investigations are needed these will be discussed with you and you will be given another information sheet which explains the tests below in more detail.

Your child may need to be admitted to the ward to complete these tests.

Blood tests – to look for clotting problems (may cause easy bruising) or problems with the bones

CT head – to look at the brain and skull for injuries or fractures

Eye examination – to look at the back of the eye for bleeding

Skeletal survey – x-rays of all the bones to look for any fractures. The x-rays have to be repeated in 10-14 days as sometimes fractures aren’t visible until they are starting to heal which can take a few days.

What happens after the medical examination?

You will be told what the doctor has found and their opinion, and if there are concerns regarding child abuse or neglect a referral to social care will be made (if not already done). If there are concerns regarding physical abuse the social worker will also discuss the findings with the Police (Strategy discussion). The plan from this discussion will be explained to you by the social worker when they see you.

You will also be informed by the paediatrician if they think any investigations (tests) are necessary. Not every child will have any investigations done. If additional tests are needed your child may need to stay in hospital. In most cases you are able to stay with your child but if you are not this will be discussed with you by the social worker. We aim to complete all the tests as soon as possible but sometimes there may be unexpected delays. The paediatrician will inform you of such delays.

Who will know that my child has had a Child Protection Medical examination?

Following the examination the paediatrician writes a report that is sent to the Social Worker if a referral was made to social care. If the police become involved and they are concerned that a crime has been committed and the case has to go to court the paediatrician may also be required to write a police statement. Your General Practitioner (GP) will also be informed and if your child is under 5 the Health Visitor will also be informed as well as any other specialist doctors who look after your child (where appropriate). The Safeguarding Nurses and Doctors will also get a copy of the letter.

What does a Child Protection Medical Examination involve?

The child protection medical involves asking questions and a physical examination (looking at your child from head to toe). Sometimes investigations (tests) such as blood tests, x-rays, eye examination and CT head scans are needed.

Who is present when we see the Paediatrician?

There may be another member of staff present when you see the paediatrician (nurse, social worker or junior doctor). Sometimes where appropriate, the paediatrician will ask to speak to your child alone. The parents/carers of young children are usually present for the physical examination. Older children will be given the choice as to whether a parent or carer is present. The doctor will also request for a chaperone to be present for the examination.

What questions will I be asked?

The paediatrician will ask you about any illnesses your child has had. They will ask you about their birth, development, medications, allergies, immunisations, behaviour and family life. Questions are often asked about daily activities such as sleeping, eating and going to the toilet. The doctor will ask you about the reason your child was referred. Your child will be asked if he/she wants to talk to the doctor on their own.

What happens during the examination?

Your child will be weighed and measured. A general examination including listening to the heart and chest and feeling the tummy will be carried out. Your child will be examined from top to toe and any injuries will be noted, measured and drawn on a body map.