

What to Expect During a Voiding Cystourethrogram (VCUG)

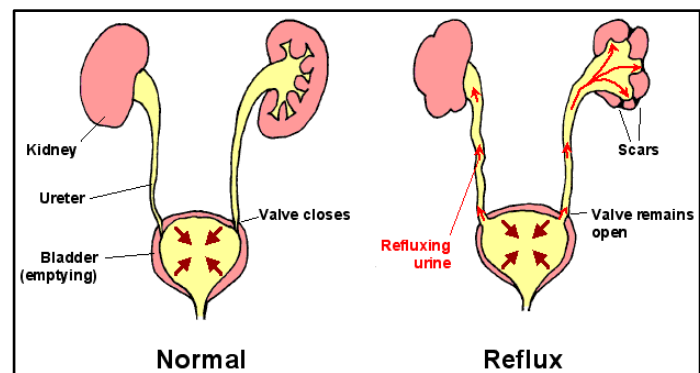
Introduction

A voiding cystourethrogram (VCUG) is a test that uses video x-rays to help doctors see how the urinary tract is working. The urinary tract is the system that carries pee through the body and includes:

- Kidneys – the part of the body that makes pee.
- Ureters – the tubes that take the pee from the kidneys to the bladder.
- Bladder – the part of the body that holds the pee.
- Urethra – the tube where the pee comes out of the body.

Urinary Reflux

A VCUG lets the doctors see if your child has urinary reflux. Urinary reflux is when the pee in the bladder goes back up the ureters to the kidneys instead of leaving the body through the urethra. Having this knowledge will help the doctors to make a plan for your child.



<https://edren.org/ren/edren-info/reflux-nephropathy/>

The Day of Your Child's VCUG

- You and your child will check in at the front desk and they will help you check in with the radiology department.
- You and your child will wait in the waiting room until called for the VCUG.
- You can bring stuffed animals, coloring books, iPad/tablet, games, etc. to the hospital to stay busy while you and your child wait.
- You and your child will meet your care team for the day including:
 - **Radiology technologist** – the person who will do the VCUG, place the catheter, and use the contrast liquid.
 - **Child Life Specialist** – the person who explains the VCUG to your child and helps them cope during the VCUG.
 - **Radiologist** – the doctor who works with the radiology technologist to do and interpret the VCUG.



Before the VCUG

Your child will:

- Put on a hospital gown.
- Lie on the table. The camera will come close to their body but not touch or hurt them.
- Have a catheter (tube) placed into their bladder.
 - The technologist will clean and numb the urethra before placing the catheter.
 - Boys will lie with legs straight.
 - Girls will lie with butterfly/frog legs.

During the VCUG

Now that the catheter is in place, it is time to start the VCUG.

- The radiology technologist puts the contrast liquid through the catheter into the bladder.
 - This liquid is what is what you see on the x-rays. It is how the doctors watch the flow of pee in your child's urinary tract.
- As the bladder starts to fill, your child will feel the need to pee.
- Your child will be asked to hold their pee for as long as possible so the doctors can see their bladder full in the pictures.
- Your child will need to roll from side to side while the pictures are taken.
- The doctors will ask your child to pee the contrast liquid out onto the table.
 - The doctors will continue to take pictures of the urinary tract while your child is peeing. This helps them see what the bladder looks like while your child is peeing and how the urinary tract is emptying.
 - The catheter will be removed while your child is peeing to ease any discomfort.

After the VCUG

- Your doctors will review the results of the VCUG during a follow-up appointment or by phone call.
- Some children have a slight stinging feeling while peeing for a few hours after the test. This is normal and can be relieved with pain medicine such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.
- Some children see a bit of blood in their pee. This is caused by irritation from the catheter but should go away quickly.

How to Help Your Child Cope

Prepare your child by talking about the upcoming VCUG using "The VCUG Guide for Kids."

- Your child may feel worried about their upcoming VCUG. They may cope through crying or asking questions. Preparation can help children feel more comfortable.
- Decide who will be with your child and what may help them relax such as holding their hands, taking deep breaths, squeezing a stress ball, watching a movie, etc.
- Encourage your child to practice peeing while laying down in the bathtub. Reassure them that they will not get in trouble for doing this during their VCUG.