

EAR, NOSE AND THROAT ASSOCIATES OF CHESTER COUNTY

Alexander C. Keszeli, D.O. **Alfred J. Mauriello, II, M.D.**
Michael A. Picariello, M.D. **Joseph L. Smith, II, M.D.**
Daniella D. Benson, PA-C
Nicole A. Walstein, PA-C

FEES- FLEXIBLE ENDOSCOPIC EVALUATION OF SWALLOWING

A flexible endoscopic evaluation of swallowing (FEES) is a test used to evaluate your swallowing function. A speech pathologist looks into your throat using an endoscope (a small flexible tube with a light attached) while you eat and drink. Your doctor should know if you have had any surgery to your neck, throat, or nose. Also, please inform the physician and speech pathologist if you have had any reactions to topical or local anesthetic agents in the past. You do not need someone to drive you home afterward.

During the procedure you will be sitting up in a chair. The speech pathologist will pass the endoscope through your nose and into the upper part of your throat. Your vocal cords and the top of your windpipe will be seen on a monitor. You will be given food and drink to swallow during the test, and the speech pathologist will be able to see whether any material enters your windpipe. If you have swallowing problems you may be asked to try different techniques or positions while you swallow to see if they help. The food and drink used for the study are dyed green with food coloring to make them easier to see on the monitor. Some people experience mild discomfort during the procedure, which may include a feeling of pressure or tightness in the nose or a gagging sensation.

The FEES will test your ability to swallow food and drink safely and comfortably. If you have trouble swallowing you may be at risk for aspiration. Aspiration occurs when food or drink enters the windpipe, potentially going into the lungs. Aspiration may put you at risk for developing an infection of the lungs, called aspiration pneumonia. Swallowing problems may also put you at risk for not getting enough liquids or food (dehydration or malnutrition). Based on information from the study, the speech pathologist will help your doctor determine the best way for you to get the nutrition that you need. This may include changing your diet, using strategies to make swallowing safer and easier or other options.

Although the study usually takes about 10 to 15 minutes, the speech pathologist will review the results, discuss them with you, and determine the best nutrition plan with you and/or your doctor. A full report of the study will be given to your doctor. Please allow 45 minutes to one hour for your appointment.