Pregnancy Testing Before Procedures

Why does my child need a pregnancy test?
Some procedures can be harmful to a pregnant female or unborn child. Sometimes pregnancies are a surprise. We don't want to accidently cause harm. We do a pregnancy test to provide the safest care possible. A urine sample is needed to do a pregnancy test. Girls who are 11 years old and older, or younger girls who have started their periods, are tested for pregnancy before procedures that are possibly harmful to the unborn child are done. This is whether the child is in the hospital or is an outpatient.
Some of these procedures include:
• x-ray or radiation
• anesthesia
• some medicines
• sedation
• chemotherapy
• injection of contrast media
• magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)
• nuclear medicine or positron emission tomography (PET) scan
• computerized tomography (CT) of the belly. A pregnancy test does not have to be done for a CT of the head, neck, arms, or legs below the knees.

When is the pregnancy test done?
• The test must be done within 7 days before the procedure.
• If your child is scheduled for an outpatient procedure, the pregnancy test can be done ahead of time at your child's Primary Care Physician's office. If the pregnancy test is not done there, it can be done at Phoenix Children's Hospital before the procedure begins.
• If your child is admitted to Phoenix Children's Hospital, the pregnancy test will be done when admitted.

Can I refuse the test?
• You can refuse a pregnancy test for your child.
• If you refuse the test, you or your child’s legal guardian will need to sign a form.
• In some cases, the procedure will not be done without a pregnancy test. If you have questions, talk to your child's doctor.
How is the pregnancy test done?
• The pregnancy test is fast and easy. A urine sample is tested and results are ready within 4 minutes.
• If the urine test is positive, we may perform a blood test.

What happens after the pregnancy test?
• If your child is not pregnant, the procedure can be done as planned.
• If your child is scheduled for an outpatient procedure and the pregnancy test is positive, your child will be referred to her Primary Care Physician for follow up.
• If your child is admitted to Phoenix Children’s Hospital and the test is positive, the doctor will talk with you about the risks and benefits of continuing with the planned procedure.

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
602-933-1400
866-933-6459
www.phoenixchildrens.org
www.theemilycenter.org
Facebook: facebook.com/theemilycenter
Twitter: @emilycenter
Pinterest: pinterest.com/emilycenter

If you have any questions or concerns,
☐ call your child’s doctor or ☐ call ______________________

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.
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Name of Health Care Provider: _______________________________
Date returned: ______________ ☐ db

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

Would you say this handout is 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?

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

The Emily Center
Health Education Specialist
Phoenix Children’s Hospital
1919 East Thomas Road
Phoenix, AZ 85016-7710

602-933-1395

Thank you for helping us!