Let’s Get Ready for a VCUG Test

at UnityPoint Health Methodist
Hi! My name is Olivia. I want to tell you about my VCUG test at Methodist. My doctor told me a VCUG is a short way of saying Voiding Cystourethrogram (Voyding Sis-toe-you-wreath-row-gram). The test will help my doctor see how my kidneys and bladder are working. I’ll tell you what these words mean later!
First my Mom and I went to the front desk at Methodist. The friendly person there asked my Mom some questions. Then a nice hospital volunteer took us to the X-ray waiting room. I read a book until the X-ray Technologist (Tech) came and got me and my Mom for my VCUG test.
Next the Tech brought me to a room with a large table that moved, a small TV screen, and two big cameras. On the table was a teddy bear I named Beary. The Tech told me I could take Beary home with me. There were also movies for me to watch and other fun toys to play with. My Mom stayed with me the whole time I was there.
The Tech (or the Child Life Specialist) told my Mom and me what the test would be like. She told me all about the things I might see, hear and feel during my visit to the hospital. She also explained things to me and answered all my questions so I knew what was going to happen.

Then I went into the bathroom with my Mom, and I took off my shirt, pants, and underwear and got into a cute hospital gown.
Then I laid down on the table with a pillow and blanket to keep me warm and covered up. My job was to hold still while the Tech took an X-ray picture of my kidneys and bladder with the big camera. My mom had to put on a special apron, just like the Tech, during the test.

My kidneys are parts inside my body that look like beans! They send my pee to my bladder. My bladder is like a balloon inside my body that holds my pee until I go potty. Getting my picture taken didn’t hurt at all. After that, I got to watch a movie I had picked out.
Then the nice Nurse came in and showed me how to make froggy legs so she could put on some special medicine that will numb the part of my body where I pee. She said this special medicine would help me not feel anything while I made the froggy legs. The nurse then used special brown soap to clean the part of my body where I pee. It felt a little cold and wet. (Boys keep their legs straight for this part of the test.)
The Nurse then told me she needed to put a small bendy tube, called a catheter, in the hole where I pee. She said the tube helps put the special water into my bladder. The special water, called contrast, helps the X-ray Doctor see how my body is working when he looks at the TV screen.
The Nurse told me I had a job to do while she was putting in the tube. She said I should take slow, deep breaths. This would help my tummy muscles relax, and that would make it easier for the small tube to go in the hole where I pee. I also got to blow bubbles and a party blower to help me relax and take deep breaths.
After the tube was in, the Tech used some tape to keep the small tube in the right place. Then the tube was connected to the special water.

The Tech then moved a big camera over me. She told me that the camera moved up and down, and back and forth.
Then the nice X-ray Doctor (Radiologist) came into the room and told the Tech to start the special water. When the special water came into my body it felt warm. The Doctor took pictures of my bladder with the big camera. The camera came close to my body but it did not touch me and it did not hurt. It just took pictures of my bladder.
As the special water went into my bladder, my job was to let the Doctor or Tech know when I felt like I had to pee. But before I peed on the table the Doctor told me he had to take some more pictures as I rolled on my side (turning on one side, and then the other).

After those pictures were taken, the Doctor said to pee on the towels. It seemed funny to pee on the towels, but the Doctor said this would help him get the best pictures of my kidneys and bladder. As I peed on the towels, the Tech took off the tape and took out the small tube.

**Special Note:** Sometimes the Doctor will need to fill up the bladder a second time with the special water. After this, the Tech will take off the tape and take out the small tube.
Now my test was done! As the Tech helped me get off the table, the Doctor showed my mom the pictures. The Tech then had my Mom and me go into the bathroom to change back into my clothes. She gave us warm washcloths to help take off the special water that felt a little sticky. I got all dressed and ready to go home.
My VCUG test went by very fast and I got to bring home my bear, stickers, and bubbles!
People I Met

- Front Desk Receptionist
- Child Life Specialist
- X-Ray Technologist (Tech)
- Nurse
- Radiologist (X-Ray Doctor)

Things I Saw

- X-ray T.V.
- X-ray Table & Cameras
- Towels
- Special Water (Contrast)
- Bendy Tube (Catheter)