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1st draft 2008

Reviewed November 2011

Review date: August 2014

The Newcastle upon Tyne
Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Children's Services

Information leaflet for
parents/carers

S k e l e t a l



THE
great north
CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Skeletal Survey

This leaflet has been produced to provide you with information about skeletal surveys. If you have any further questions, please ask the doctor looking after your child.

What is a skeletal survey?

A skeletal survey is a set of x-rays of all the bones in the body. It involves taking about 24 small x-rays of different parts of the body, not just one big x-ray of the whole body.

Why is my child having a skeletal survey?

A skeletal survey is performed to look for any abnormality or injury to the bones.

The doctor looking after your child will explain why this investigation is needed.

Where is the skeletal survey done?

The skeletal survey is performed in the x-ray department.

What happens during a skeletal survey?

One of the nurses from the ward will take you and your child to the x-ray department.

You will be met by the people who take the x-rays (radiographers).

To get a clear picture, it is important that your child is as still as possible during the x-ray. This means that your child will need to be held quite firmly for a few seconds while each x-ray is taken. The radiographers will show you and the nurse how to hold your child while each x-ray is taken.

It does not hurt, but some children can get upset because they do not like being held still. It is a good idea to bring a feed, dummy or a toy along to help settle your child if needed.

How long will it take?

It will take about an hour for all the x-rays to be taken. The x-rays then need to be checked by one of the x-ray doctors (radiologist) to see if they are happy that they can see all the bones clearly. They sometimes ask for some more x-rays to be taken before your child goes back to the ward.

How much radiation is there in a skeletal survey?

The amount of radiation from a skeletal survey is about the same as 4 to 8 months background radiation.

Background radiation is the very low dose of radiation we are all exposed to naturally from the earth. If you would like to discuss this further, please ask the doctor looking after your child.

How will you get the results of the skeletal survey?

The doctor looking after your child will explain when the results are likely to be available and discuss the best way to let you know the results.

Will my child need any of the x-rays to be repeated?

We usually repeat the chest x-rays about 10-14 days after the full skeletal survey. Other x-rays may need to be repeated as well but your child's doctor will explain if this is necessary.

Remember, if you have any further questions about the test please ask the doctor caring for your child.