

What happens after the Examination?

After the examination, the doctors will explain their findings to you and also to your child, if they are old enough to understand. They will also explain their findings to the Police Officer and Social Worker. The Police Officer and/or Social Worker will then explain to you what will happen next.

The doctors will prepare a report for the Police or Procurator Fiscal from the Court explaining their findings from the examination. The report is also sent to the Social Worker. It can be used as part of the evidence in a Children's Hearing or Court Case.

The Children's Doctor will also write to your family doctor (GP) and health visitor or school nurse (if you have one) about the examination and any treatment or follow-up.

The reports will not be shared with anyone else without your permission.

After reading this leaflet, please make sure you ask questions about anything you do not understand or want to know more about.

More Information and Support:

Social Worker Name:

Telephone:

Police Officer Name:

Telephone:

Or contact your local Social Work Office & Police Station

Childline: Freephone 08001111

For more copies of this leaflet, please contact:
SEAT MCN Child Protection : 01506771797

We are grateful to NHS Forth Valley Child Protection Department for allowing us to adapt their leaflet

getting
it right
for every child



Child Protection:

A Guide to the Medical Examination of Your Child

Information for Parents and Carers

You are being asked to agree to a medical examination for your child. This is because of concerns from other Health Workers, a Social Worker or Police. This is slightly different from other types of medical examination. This leaflet explains what will happen and why.

Who will do the Examination?

There are usually two doctors:

A Children's Doctor (Paediatrician) is an independent doctor who works with children. This doctor has special training in seeing children who may have been abused or where there are other concerns.

A Forensic Doctor or "Police Surgeon" is another independent doctor who also has special training.

Together they make an assessment and can give an opinion about any concerns, including how an injury might have happened.

Sometimes only one doctor may be needed. Sometimes a doctor in training is also there. If you are not happy with this, let us know.

Who else will be there?

Children usually like to have a parent or carer with them. Sometimes this may not be possible or is not appropriate. If this happens, they will explain why and offer another person, such as a close friend or a nurse to be with your child instead. If you also need an interpreter, let us know.

The Social worker and Police Officer will be there too but they will wait outside the curtain screen during the examination.

Consent

At the start, you and your child will be asked if you agree to the examination going ahead. This is called 'consent'.

You will be asked to sign a consent form or give permission over the phone if you cannot be there in person. Your child can only do this for themselves if they are old enough and can understand what will happen. To do this for themselves, they usually need to be at least 12 years old.

Before giving consent, you must be happy that you fully understand what is going to happen and how any photographs, results or samples taken will be used. You have the **right to refuse** all or any part of the examination and also **change your mind**, even after it starts. You or the doctors can also stop the examination if your child wishes or if he or she becomes distressed.

If you refuse to consent or ask to stop the examination, the doctors will need to speak to you with the Police and Social worker to help decide what is best for your child.

What will they do?

A nurse will weigh and measure your child to check their growth.

The doctors will ask you questions about your child's health from the time he or she was born until now. This is because they need to know about any health problems that may affect your child. They will also ask about the family and home so that they can build up a picture of your child's daily life.

The examination is a very thorough top-to-toe examination, like at a hospital appointment. Extra care is taken in looking for any bruises or injuries and these may be measured using a measuring tape.

They will also check your child's development.

Sometimes an intimate examination is needed to check for injuries and make sure everything is alright. This happens when the concerns are of a sexual nature or if your child has symptoms in the intimate area. If needed, this will be explained to you at the beginning, when giving consent.

Recording what they see

The doctors will draw and describe any injuries they find. Sometimes they need to take photographs. These are taken by a specially trained Police Photographer. These will only be seen by the doctors and the Police. If the case goes to a Children's Hearing or Court, they may also be seen by members of the Children's Panel or Court.

Intimate examinations are usually recorded on a video or DVD. This means that children do not need to be examined again if the doctors need a second opinion, as they can look at the video recording instead. The recording does not have the child's face or name on it and it is stored in a secure place. This is in line with the Data Protection Act. It would only be seen by other doctors if they need a second opinion or if the case is going to court.

Other Tests and Treatment

Some children may need to have tests such as blood tests or x-rays. These help the doctors find out about medical conditions or find injuries that cannot be seen by examination. Sometimes children need to be admitted to hospital for tests or treatment but this is rare. The Children's Doctor will explain to you about any tests, treatment or follow-up appointments that your child needs.