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Respiratory Department

**Saturation Screening: For Children under 5 years old with Down Syndrome in Liverpool**

Information for parents and carers

**Why has my child been referred for saturation screening?**

• It is recommended that every child with Down Syndrome aged 5 and under should have an annual oxygen saturation study to screen for obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA).

**What is obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA)?**

• It is a condition that causes breathing trouble during sleep. Children with low muscle tone, as in Down Syndrome, are more likely to have OSA.

• Signs and symptoms of OSA include loud snoring or noisy breathing during sleep, difficulty paying attention at school, sleeping in unusual positions, periods of not breathing and/or difficulty waking up in the morning.

• Some children with Down syndrome who have OSA may not have any symptoms at all.

**What is an oxygen saturation study?**

• A pulse oximeter is used to measure the oxygen and heart rate throughout two nights whilst your child sleeps as normal at home. It is a simple, painless test which uses a sensor placed on the toe.



**What happens to the results?**

• Once the study is completed a report will be produced by a consultant respiratory paediatrician. This might take up to 3 weeks.

• This report will be sent back to the referring consultant and a letter written to you with the recommendations from the study.

**What are the possible outcomes from the study?**

• If the study is normal a repeat will be automatically ordered for approximately a year’s time, until the age of 5 years

• If the study suggests OSA, an outpatient appointment with the Respiratory Team will be made, and a full inpatient sleep study might be requested.

• If the study shows something that needs more urgent attention, you might be contacted directly by a member of the Alder Hey Respiratory Team.

• If OSA is confirmed, then management and follow up will be arranged by our team.

**How often will my child need this study doing?**

• This study will be arranged yearly.

**What if I have further questions?**

• When you come to collect the pulse oximeter, please ask a team member any questions you have. If they cannot answer, they will arrange for someone to contact you. You can also contact us on the number below between 9am and 4pm.

• If you do not wish your child to have the screening test for any reason, please inform the department and we will feedback to the referrer.

**Returning the pulse oximeter**

• As we only have a limited number of machines, it would be appreciated if you can return the machine the next day. If this is a problem, then please discuss this with the team when you collect the machine.

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This leaflet only gives general information.

You must always discuss the individual treatment of your child with the appropriate member of staff. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about your child’s treatment. This information can be made available in other languages and formats if requested.

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