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The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: [patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk) if you would like a reference list.

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# The Palatal Investigation

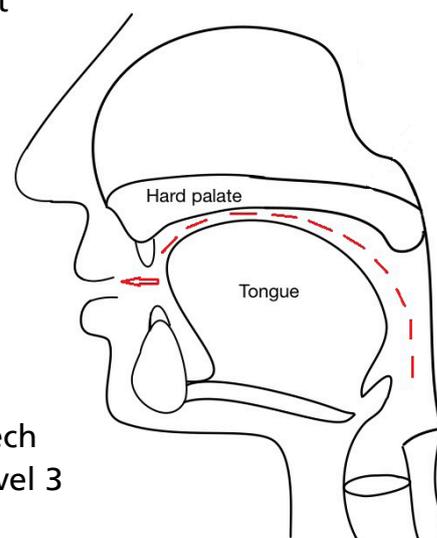
## Clinic (page 1 of 2)

What to expect from your appointment at the Palatal Investigation Clinic

### What is the Palatal Investigation Clinic?

You will be referred to this clinic if your speech sounds nasal or you have food or drink regularly coming down your nose. This may be caused by a problem with the movement of your soft palate.

Picture 1 shows how the soft palate seals against the back of the throat to separate the mouth and nose. This means that you can build up pressure in your mouth, which is needed for most speech sounds.



### Where is this clinic?

The clinic is held once a month in the Speech and Language Therapy Department on Level 3 at Salisbury District Hospital.

### Who will be there?

A team of professionals will see you. They include:

Consultant Plastic Surgeon (when available)

Specialist Speech and Language Therapist

A Radiographer.

### What is involved?

Before the clinic you can eat and drink as normal and you will be awake and sitting in a chair for the assessments.

This clinic comprises 3 procedures:

1. Speech Assessment
2. Nasometry
3. X-ray of the palate moving during speech.

During these you will be asked to repeat sounds and sentences.

The X-ray is recorded onto DVD. Parents/partners are usually asked to wait in an adjoining room during the X-ray. They can see and hear everything that is happening through a one way mirror and a member of

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the team can be in the room to answer any questions. Young children may need one parent to stay with them during the X-ray.

Sometimes a nasendoscopy\* is needed as well as an X-ray. The nasendoscope is a small flexible telescope that is passed through the nostril to view the palate from above. This procedure can be uncomfortable so an anaesthetic is sprayed into the nose.

Once all the assessments have been completed a Plastic Surgeon and Speech Therapist will carry out a feedback session with you. You will be able to see the DVD of the X-ray recording and we will discuss the results and possible courses of action with you. These may be:

## 1. Surgery

If we can see that the movement and structure of your palate is not sufficient to close the nose off from the mouth, surgery may be offered to correct this.

## 2. Speech Therapy

If we find that you need to learn to control your palate movement in speech, and to make and use speech sounds more accurately, speech therapy may be offered.

## 3. No further action is needed

You will be discharged from the clinic.

## What happens next?

If surgery or therapy is recommended, we will see you again after it has been carried out. It is always possible to be seen again in the Palatal Investigation Clinic if you continue to have problems.

\*If a nasendoscopy has been carried out, the effect of the anaesthetic usually lasts about 30 minutes, so care should be taken with hot and cold food and drink during this time. There may be some slight discomfort felt in the nose after the procedure but this is usually short-lived.

The whole clinic, including the feedback session, will last approximately 3 hours. You will have a chance to leave the department for a break/refreshments etc. during this time.

## How can I get more information?

You can contact one of the Specialist Speech and Language Team at Salisbury District Hospital on: 01722 345571.

Please also see the Spires website [www.spirescentre.nhs.uk](http://www.spirescentre.nhs.uk)

