

Then why should my child have a medical examination?

- We cannot tell in advance which young people will have an abnormal medical finding or a medical issue without an examination.
- Young people who have been touched inappropriately often worry they are different from other children. The medical examination reassures them that they are 'just like all other young people'.

Can children and parents choose not to have a medical examination?

- Yes. Young persons have to consent to this intimate examination. We always consider the wishes of parents/carers and the young person around medical examinations.

NOTES

How do I get to the Family Centre?

The Family Centre 2 Medical Suite is based in St. Finbarr's Hospital on the Douglas Road. It is close to the main entrance of the Hospital and is signposted on the hospital grounds. There is free car parking available at the hospital. Buses on the **No.207** and **No.210** routes stop outside the gates of the hospital.

The Eircode for St Finbarrs Hospital is T12 XH60.

The Family Centre

TUSLA (Child & Family Agency),
St. Finbarr's Hospital,
Douglas Road,
Cork.
Tel: 021 4923302



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Your guide
to
Family Centre
Medical
Examinations

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What is the Family Centre?

- The Family Centre is a TUSLA - Child & Family Agency service in Cork for children where there are concerns of sexual abuse.
- As a part of our services, we offer medical examinations to young people.

What is the purpose of a medical examination?

- To reassure the young person and family about the child's health. Most children who have been sexually abused have normal medical examinations.
- To examine children, treat infection if present, and provide advice and follow up during this sensitive time. We will prescribe emergency contraception and other treatments where indicated.
- To determine if there is physical evidence resulting from the alleged acts.

Will the examination hurt?

- Most young people experience no discomfort from the examination.
- The examinations are carried out by a doctor assisted by a nurse who work well with young people and are very gentle in their examination approach.

In advance of a medical examination:

Our colleagues in Galway made a video to outline what happens in advance of attendance. The name of the You Tube video is **CASATS pre-attendance video**. Viewing is highly recommended.

What happens at a medical examination?

The usual procedure is as follows:-

- The Doctor and Nurse meet parents/carers to get a medical history and explain the examination.
- The examination is carried out.
- The Doctor and Nurse meet the parents/carers to discuss the examination, and to answer any questions.

What does the examination include?

- The examination includes a complete head to toe physical examination, like a 'well child' exam at a doctor's surgery.
- This includes an examination of the private parts and bottom.
- A colposcope will be used.
- The examination of your child's private parts is carried out using various positions.
- Sometimes a thin Foley catheter is used to assist visualisation of the genitalia.
- Urine and other samples can be analysed for sexually transmitted infection and pregnancy testing.

What is a Colposcope?

- A Colposcope is like binoculars. It is helpful at Family Centre medical examinations because it is able to magnify 8 to 20 times more than your eyes can see. It is also used as a light source.
- The Colposcope is linked to recording equipment to record findings.
- The Colposcope does not go inside the body nor does it touch the skin.

Who is present during the examination?

- The examining doctor and the assisting nurse.
- The young person is welcome to have a parent/carer or other support person of her/his choosing in the examination room.
- **N.B:** Please arrange childcare for other children who cannot be left unattended in the waiting area.

Will the examination show that the alleged event(s) happened?

- Most examinations will be normal.
- Many young people who have been sexually abused have normal findings. This does not mean that nothing happened.
- Young people's private parts heal very quickly just like most other body parts and injuries rarely leave a scar even when penetration has occurred.