

**SPEECH AND SWALLOWING SPECIALISTS
OF FLORIDA, LLC**
South Florida's Own Mobile FEES Company
www.swallowspecialistsfl.com

Flexible Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES) and Videofluoroscopic Swallow Studies (VFSS) are both **valuable** tools for assessment of dysphagia. Which is best for my patient?

FEES – Indications

- Concern for poor management of secretions.
- Patient has risk factors for laryngeal pathologies (i.e. prolonged intubation) or presents with concomitant dysphonia (voice disorder).
- Concern for pharyngeal dysphagia despite negative VFSS results.
- Family or caregiver's input is desired or needed during exam.
- Patient is bedbound or has physical limitations that prevent participation in VFSS.
- Therapeutic exam desired (biofeedback).
- Severe dysphagia - conservative exam preferred or indicated.
- Visualization of mucosa and surface anatomy desired or needed.
- Concern for internal lymphedema.
- Suspicion for laryngeal abnormalities.
- Evaluation with specific food items required or desired.
- Patient receiving mechanical ventilation.
- Patient is in isolation room and unable to be transported to x-ray suite.
- Concern for fatigue with activity affecting swallowing function.

FEES – Contraindications

- Bilateral nasal obstruction.
- Unstable facial fractures.
- Refractory epistaxis.
- Agitation.
- Poor tolerance of exam in the past.

VFSS - Indications

- Vague dysphagia symptoms.
- Primary oral stage deficits.
- Suspect UES hypertonicity or esophageal stricture.
- Concern for pharyngeal/esophageal diverticulum.
- Unknown etiology of dysphagia.
- Suspected of submucosal pathology (i.e. prevertebral swelling, osteophytes), with possible negative effect on swallow function.
- Want a comprehensive view of all 3 phases of the swallow.
- Complains consistent with upper esophageal problems.
- Patient meets criteria for exclusion from FEES.

NOTE: In some patients, both tests may be indicated.

VFSS - Contraindications

- Barium allergy.
- Patient size /body habitus preclude adequate visualization.
- Absence of swallow response.
- Known or suspected tear in esophagus or intestines.

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