

## Additional Resources

### ➤ Massachusetts Family Voices

1-800-331-0688, ext. 210 or  
[www.massfamilyvoices.org](http://www.massfamilyvoices.org)

*A grass roots organization of families and friends speaking out for children and youth with special health care needs. Provides links to services, support and disability specific organizations throughout the state.*

### ➤ Family TIES

1-800-905-TIES or  
[www.massfamilyties.org](http://www.massfamilyties.org)

*A statewide, parent-run information, resource and referral network. Also provides parent-to-parent support and can match you with a family who shares a similar life experience.*

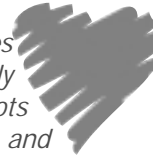
### ➤ For kid, teen & parent information, visit:

[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)

*This site provides:*

- ♥ *Definitions of medical terms*
- ♥ *Information on children's health problems*
- ♥ *Lots of other information*

*Massachusetts Family Voices is a state chapter of Family Voices, a national grassroots network of families, friends, and professional partners brought together by a common concern for children and youth with special health care needs. Mass Family Voices can help you find other helpful material and resources for families of children and youth with special health care needs. Please contact us for more information:*



## MASSACHUSETTS FAMILY VOICES

Massachusetts Family Voices  
Federation for Children with Special  
Needs

1135 Tremont Street, Suite 420  
Boston, MA 02120

800-331-0688, x. 210 (voice)  
617-572-2094 (fax)

[massfv@fcsn.org](mailto:massfv@fcsn.org)

[www.massfamilyvoices.org](http://www.massfamilyvoices.org)



## Medical Testing & Children with Special Health Care Needs

*A Guide for Families*



A brochure for families of children with special health care needs developed by Massachusetts Family Voices.

MASSACHUSETTS  
FAMILY VOICES

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## Why Doctors Recommend Medical Tests

There are many reasons doctors recommend medical tests for children. These include:

- *To get more information about your child's medical needs*
- *To diagnose or to rule out an illness or disability*
- *To prepare for surgery or other procedure*
- *To follow up after a surgery or other procedure*



## Types of Medical Tests

There are many kinds of medical tests. Some are simple and can be done in the doctor's office. Others are more complicated, and your child may have to be admitted to the hospital. If the doctors need access to the inside of the body, the test is "invasive." Examples of invasive tests include cardiac catheterizations or endoscopy. Tests done from outside the body are "non-invasive." Examples include x-rays, electroencephalograms (EEGs) and blood work.

## When Medical Testing is Recommended For Your Child

When a doctor recommends medical tests for your child, it's normal to be scared about what it might mean and it can be hard to know all the things to ask. Your doctors, nurses and Health Plan staff can help you learn about the tests.

### Questions to Ask:

1. What is the name of the test?
2. Do you have any written materials that will help me understand this test?
3. What will we learn from the test?
4. Is the test invasive?
5. Where will the test be done?
6. Will my child need to stay overnight in the hospital?
7. What will my child feel or hear during the test?
8. Can I stay with my child during the test?
9. Will my child be given medication to relax or sleep during the test?
10. Who will be in the testing room?
11. How long will the test take?
12. When will we know the results?
13. What kind of care will my child need after the test?
14. When can my child go back to her regular activities?
15. What are the risks of this test?
16. What if we don't do this test?

## Preparing Children For Medical Tests

The doctor or nurse will tell you any special instructions to follow before the test. Sometimes children are not allowed to eat or need to stop a particular medication before a test.



Some children have had lots of medical tests. Just because your child has had many medical procedures, don't assume he is prepared for every test. To prepare your child:

- ♥ Find out about the test yourself, and talk to your child with words she understands.
- ♥ Let him express his feelings.
- ♥ Play doctor and act out the test with a favorite doll or other toy.
- ♥ Ask if your child can visit the testing room in advance.
- ♥ Before the test begins, figure out how to give your child as much control as possible. For example, let her choose the arm for the IV (intravenous).
- ♥ Give your child something to look forward to after the test such as a special toy or watching a favorite movie.

