



### What is an indirect calorimetry study?

Indirect Calorimetry (IC) is a test to measure your child's Resting Energy Expenditure (REE). This is the amount of energy—or calories—the body uses at rest (when your child isn't moving around or active).

### Why does my child need an IC test?

Sometimes, it's not clear how much nutrition a child needs. The medical team uses this study to measure your child's nutritional needs.

### How should I prepare my child?

- **Don't give your child anything to eat or drink for 12 hours before the test.** They can drink water and take their medications but nothing else. Your child's doctor or dietitian may give you different instructions just for your child. If they do, please follow those instructions.
- Limit your child's physical activity, including physical therapy, for at least 2 hours before to the study.
- Tell your child about the test in simple words. Let them know that you'll be with them during the whole test.
- You can bring your child's favorite book or video or music player to help pass the time.

### Where is the study done?

- If your child is staying in the hospital, the test will be done at their bedside.
- If you're coming to the hospital for the study, the test will be in the Gastroenterology Procedure Unit (GPU) on Boston Children's Hospital's Longwood campus. Use the Farley/Pavilion elevators to get to the GPU on the 5th floor of the Pavilion building.
- **Please arrive 15 minutes before the scheduled time of your child's test.**

### What will happen during the study?

- The dietitian will explain the test and answer your questions.
- They'll take your child's weight and height and will ask your child to lie on a bed and relax before the test begins.
- They'll place a canopy (a clear, bubble-like helmet) over your child's head and ask them to stay still for about 15 minutes (see *Figure 1*). Your child may watch TV or a video or listen to music during this time.

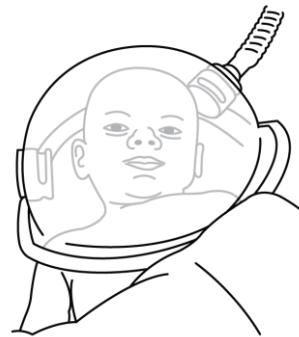


Figure 1.

### What will happen after the study?

- The dietitian will take the canopy off your child's head. Your child may go back to their usual activities. A doctor or dietitian will give you the results if your child is staying in the hospital (inpatient).
- If your child isn't staying in the hospital (outpatient), please contact your child's doctor in 1 week for the results.

### Where do I call with questions or to schedule an appointment?

- If you have any questions, please call the Gastroenterology Procedure Unit at (617) 355-6172.
- If you want to schedule an appointment with a registered dietitian, please contact the Center for Nutrition at (617) 355-4677 or email [nutritiondept@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:nutritiondept@childrens.harvard.edu).

*Please note: This Family Education Sheet is for educational purposes only. For specific medical advice, diagnoses and treatment, talk with your doctor and/or dietitian.*

*This Family Education Sheet is available in [Arabic](#) and [Spanish](#).*