

# LRI Children's Hospital

## Measuring a Childs Height.

Staff relevant to:	Nurses and Health Care Assistants trained in measuring a Childs height.
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Written by:	Pauline Jones
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### **1. Introduction and who guideline applies to**

Monitoring a child's growth helps to confirm their healthy growth and development, or identify early a potential nutritional or health problem. The main objectives of growth monitoring and promotion of optimal growth are the following:

- To provide a tool for nutrition and health evaluation of individual children
- To initiate effective action in response to abnormal patterns of growth
- To teach families how nutrition, physical activity, genetics and illness can affect growth and, in doing so, motivate and facilitate individual initiative and improved child care practices

This guideline has been developed to provide guidance for Nurses, Health Care Assistants and Dieticians trained in measuring a Childs height.

#### **Related documents**

This guideline needs to be used in conjunction with relevant infection control and consent policies to ensure the child receives safe care and children and families are able to understand the reasons for care to facilitate co-operation.

### **2. Resources.**

- Appropriate height measuring device (measure in centimetres only).
- Range of World Health Organisation (WHO) growth charts.
- Competent children's nurses trained in measuring a child's height.
- Competent Health Care Assistants trained in measuring a child's height can act as a second checker.
- In outpatients, Health Care Assistants will receive specific instruction to enable them to act as a primary checker.

### In a Child Under 2 Years of Age.

No.	Action	Rationale
1	2 people necessary to perform this procedure (parent/guardian can be 2 <sup>nd</sup> person).	For accuracy and safety.
2	Use the Supine Table or the Baby Measure Mat.	For reliability.
3	Measure the child naked (remove nappy also).  Place the child on his/her back, on the measuring device with the top of the head held firmly in contact with the headboard so that the corner of the eye is in a vertical line with the middle of the ear. One person holds the head firmly and the other straightens both legs if possible, or leg nearest to you for the bigger infant and bring the foot board against the sole of the foot.	
4	Parents can assist with positioning the child and holding the head.	Reassures the child.
5	Read to the nearest millimetre and record immediately.	To reduce the risk of error.
6	The member of staff should sign in the appropriate place in the documentation.	For accuracy and safety.

### In a Child Over 2 Years of Age.

No.	Action	Rationale
1	Use the Stadiometer, Magnimeter or the Leicester Height Measure, or SECA Height Measures.	To obtain reliable measurements.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before measurement, ensure shoes, bulky clothing and hair ornaments are removed.</li> <li>• Ask the child to stand with heels together and heels, buttocks and shoulder blades against the back of the instrument.</li> <li>• Check heels are flat on the floor, legs are straight, shoulders are relaxed and arms are hanging loosely.</li> <li>• Lower the headboard and ensure good contact with the head.</li> <li>• Gently ease the head into the correct</li> </ul>	For accuracy, consistency and safety.

	<p>plane so that the centre of the ear hole is level with the lower boarder of the eye socket.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage normal breathing.</li> <li>• Read the instrument at eye level to avoid parallax error, rounding to the nearest millimetre.</li> </ul>	
3	Record measurement immediately on the drug chart or medical notes and the measurer should sign in the appropriate section.	To minimise the risk of error.
4	Compare the measurement to the trend and report any deviation to Nurse Co-ordinator or Medical staff as appropriate.	To ensure appropriate action is taken.

When measuring the height of a larger child it is important to aim for a straight body line. Adjust the position by bringing the feet and head forward until a comfortable standing position and a straight body line has been achieved.

### **3. Education and Training**

All staff undertaking height measuring procedures will be trained and competency LCAT assessed.

### **4. Monitoring Compliance**

None

### **5.Supporting References**

A health professional's guide for using the new WHO growth charts. Paediatric Child Health (2010 Feb 15 (2): 84 -90)

Standards for the weighing of infants, children and young people in the acute health care setting RCN 2013

Schilg. S. & Hulse J.A. (2001) Measurement and assessment of growth in childhood: a guide for community nurses Child Growth Foundation . London

### **6. Key Words**

Height, Measuring

The Trust recognises the diversity of the local community it serves. Our aim therefore is to provide a safe environment free from discrimination and treat all individuals fairly with dignity and appropriately according to their needs.  
 As part of its development, this policy and its impact on equality have been reviewed and no detriment was identified.

<b>CONTACT AND REVIEW DETAILS</b>	
<b>Guideline Lead (Name and Title)</b> Pauline Jones Endocrine Specialist Nurse	<b>Executive Lead</b> Chief Nurse
<b>Details of Changes made during review:</b> March 2023; No changes	