

MARY HAS A MAG 3 SCAN



Written by Jacqueline Collier & Dot Mackinlay

Mary was very excited. A letter had arrived for her mother and she saw her name on it as well.

“What is it, mum?” she asked.

“It’s the letter from the hospital which we have been waiting for. Do you remember? When we were at the hospital the last time the doctor said that they were going to arrange for you to have a special test to look at your kidneys.”

“Not again” said Mary, “What’s this one called?”

“Are you ready for this ...? ... it’s a long name. It’s called a Mercaptoacetyltriglycine or a M.A.G. 3 for short.”

“I think I’ll call it a Maggie. Mum does the letter tell us what they do? Will it hurt?” asked Mary suddenly looking frightened.

“No” said Mum “Some bits may be a little uncomfortable but they shouldn’t hurt.”



Together they sat down and Mary listened while her mother explained that first of all they would go on to the ward where the nurses would want to weigh her, measure her height and blood pressure. Then she would need to do a wee into a cardboard container so that a sample could be sent to the lab to be tested. Mary knew that none of these things hurt although the blood pressure machine would squeeze her arm firmly.

After that the nurse would put some EMLA or Ametop or “cold spray” (ethyl chloride) on Mary’s hand and cover it up. That would mean that she would not feel how sharp the needle was when the nurse or doctor came to take her blood. As it would take about an hour for the EMLA cream to work, Mary was happy to learn that she could go into the playroom to play while she waited.

Then a tiny plastic tube like a needle would be put into her hand where the EMLA cream had been. The little tube would be stuck down with tape to keep it safe and this meant that Mary would not have any more needles that day. The doctors could take blood or give injections using the tube. Mary felt that all this would be O.K. as she knew that this would not hurt.

Once the tube was in place, they could go to another place called Nuclear Medicine where they would carry out the ‘Maggie’. There they would give an injection of special dye into the little tube. This would go into Mary’s kidneys and when she had the ‘Maggie’ it would help show how her kidneys were working.

To help, Mary would have to lie very still on a big couch while a big camera took some pictures. Sometimes there were some soft straps on the couch which they would wrap around children to remind them to stay still. Mum explained that this was a bit like an astronaut who has to wear straps and keep still for awhile. As soon as the pictures had been taken, Mary and her mother would be able to go home. Mary liked the idea about astronauts so much that she went off to play a game about travelling in space.

The next morning Mary was a bit worried and she asked Mum to explain everything again. She felt better after listening again and having a few cuddles. She even began to look forward to playing astronauts.

When she arrived at the ward the nurse wanted to weigh her so she went with the nurse and stood on some scales to see how much she weighed. She also had her height measured. Next was her blood pressure. Mary remembered this from her last visit to the ward. To do her blood pressure, the nurse wrapped a band of cloth around Mary's arm. This was attached to a machine which blew air into the band and squeezed her arm tightly. It then let the air out again and then some numbers appeared on the machine, which the nurse wrote down. Last of all she said that they needed to test Mary's wee so next time she went to the toilet she had to do it in a cardboard container that the nurse gave her.

Before she went away again the nurse put some of the special EMLA or Ametop or "cold spray" on the back of Mary's hand. "That will stop the needle hurting when the doctor comes to see you" the nurse said "Meanwhile you can go and play for a bit".



Mary had been playing for quite a time when the nurse or doctor came and said she just needed to put a small plastic tube in the back of her hand. Mary didn't want one but her mum and the nurse said that she had to have it done. She started to cry and the doctor told her that because of the special EMLA

cream Mary wouldn't feel how sharp the needle was and also that if she sat as still as she possibly could then the needle would have been in and out again before they could sing Mary's favourite song. Very bravely then, she sat on her mum's knee and the nurse held her hand quite tightly. Mary's mum suggested that they should sing "Old McDonald had a farm" and when her mum started, Mary joined in ...Old McDonald had hardly any animals in his farm before the doctor said that the tube was in. Mary could hardly believe it but it was true. The little plastic tube was just being taped into position to keep it safe. To take her blood the doctor then put a syringe into the little plastic tube but NO NEEDLE..

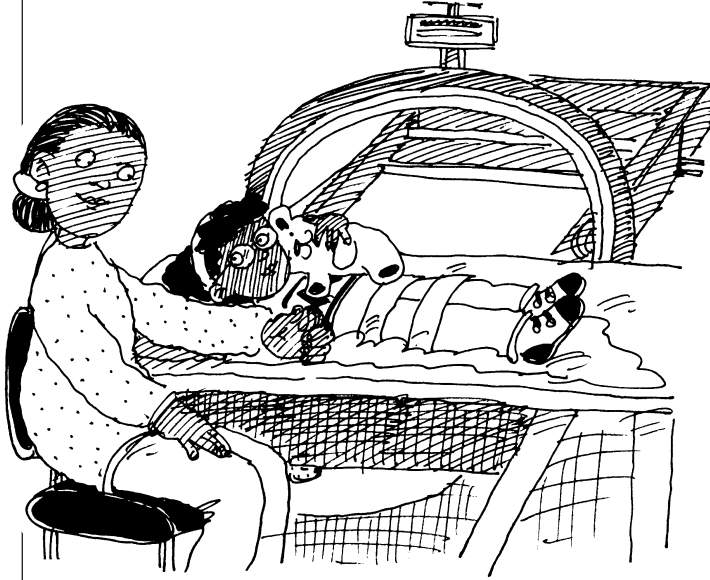


Everyone told Mary how brave she had been and they even gave her a badge with her name on that said it too.

In a short time, Mary, her mum and the nurse went to the place where the test was to be done. It was a long way down the corridor but there were lots of interesting pictures along the way. When they got there, a lady in a white coat came to meet them. She told Mary her name, gave her a lovely smile and showed them all into the room. It looked very very big



There was a special couch in the middle, and that had a huge big television and camera all around it. There was a table at the side with another television there too. It was a little bit frightening, but the nurse held her hand and she felt a little better.



The nurse lifted her onto the couch. It was very high. Because it was very important to be very still there were some pillows and straps which were padded and wrapped around her to stop her moving. Mary remembered the astronaut game and pretended she was getting ready for 'take-off'. Mum sat next to her and read her a story. Just as mum finished the story the lady came to tell her that it was all over for now and she could go back to the ward and very likely come back for one final picture in a little while. She also said what a good girl she had been. Mary was very pleased with herself and the nurse said she was very proud of her.

The nurse gave Mary a bravery certificate. Mary was glad that she was going home but she was very proud of herself.

“Can we go and show the certificate and the badge to gran before we go home?” she asked.

“Yes we can.” Said mum. “She will be delighted to know that you have done so well.”



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