

# Gastroscopy

An information guide



# Gastroscopy

Your stay on the endoscopy unit could be up to 2 hours or more depending on individual recovery time, also please note that your appointment time is only your admittance time.

A gastroscopy is a test which allows the endoscopist to look at the oesophagus (the gullet); the stomach and duodenum (part of the small intestine).

This is done by passing a long flexible tube with a bright light at the end, (which is the thickness of your little finger) through your mouth, down the oesophagus into the stomach and duodenum. Sedation may be offered for this procedure to help you relax.

## What are the possible risks?

Complications can develop during or after the procedure. Every effort is made to prevent, recognise and treat these.

- A sore throat after the test is very common and should get better after a few hours.
- Significant complications are extremely rare, but there is a very small risk of bleeding or tearing of the intestine. If this does occur it will require an admission to hospital and may require an operation. This happens 1 in 2000.
- A reaction to the drugs used is another complication and although very rare, if it does occur you may be required to stay in hospital.
- There is also a possibility of damage to teeth particularly crowns/caps/bridgework during the procedure. It is important that staff are aware of any loose teeth.

## What are the benefits?

This test gives a direct view of the inside of your stomach, oesophagus and duodenum, rather than the shadows seen on an x-ray (barium meal). We can take small samples of the lining for examination under the microscope.

## Alternatives

- Doing nothing may mean that we miss something important.
- X-rays and scans might be performed alongside your procedure or as an alternative.

## Starving before the test

You will need to starve at least 6 hours before the test. **That means nothing to eat OR drink.** Morning appointments – starve from 12 midnight. Afternoon appointments – you can only have an early light breakfast, then nothing to eat or drink until after the procedure.

## Medication

- If you take blood thinning tablets (anticoagulants e.g. Warfarin) please consult your Consultant or the anticoagulant clinic who deals with your anticoagulant medication.
- Please make sure that the doctor requesting the procedure and the one performing the procedure are both aware that you have been on anticoagulants and what instructions you have been given regarding this medication.
- If you are diabetic on medication or insulin please contact your Diabetic Nurse for specific instructions.
- If you take Clopidogrel, please consult either your Consultant or contact the Endoscopy Unit for specific instructions.
- If you have a **latex allergy** then please contact the Booking & Scheduling Team prior to your admission as the date/time might be affected.

**You must keep taking any essential prescribed tablets with a minimal amount of water.**

### **Sedation/Local anaesthetic**

A local anaesthetic spray is used to reduce the sensation in your throat. The benefit of having throat spray is that you can leave the department shortly after the test and continue with your normal daily routine.

You may request a sedative injection, this involves a drug being given through a needle (usually in the back of the hand). The sedation you receive is only a conscious sedation, not a general anaesthetic, so this will only make you drowsy not put you to sleep.

**For your own safety following sedation please comply with the following:**

- After the test you may spend approximately 1 hour on the unit recovering from the effects of the drug
- You need a responsible person to accompany you home and stay with you for at least 24 hours after the sedation, as the sedation can remain in the bloodstream for this length of time. If you are a main carer for somebody then please arrange an alternative carer
- You must not sign any legal documents for at least 24 hours
- You must not return to work, drive or drink alcohol for at least 24 hours after the sedation
- For some patients, sedation is not advised. The doctor performing the examination will discuss this with you.

**Contact details:**

Rochdale Infirmary

Telephone:- 01706 517547

**North Manchester General Hospital**

Telephone:- 0161 720 2835 or

Telephone:- 0161 604 5264 or

Telephone:- 0161 604 5265

**Fairfield General Hospital**

Telephone:- 0161 778 3341

**The Royal Oldham Hospital**

Telephone:- 0161 624 0420

**Booking & Scheduling Department**

Telephone:- 0161 778 2233

## Reference section

For further information on the evidence used in this leaflet please visit [www.pat.nhs.uk](http://www.pat.nhs.uk)



**If English is not your first language and you need help, please contact the Interpretation and Translation Service**

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For advice on stopping smoking contact the Specialist Stop Smoking Service on 01706 517 522

**For general enquiries please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 0161 604 5897**

**For enquiries regarding clinic appointments, clinical care and treatment please contact 0161 624 0420 and the Switchboard Operator will put you through to the correct department / service**

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**Date of publication: November 2004**

**Date of review: June 2021**

**Date of next review: June 2023**

**Ref: PI(SU)089**

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