

CAPSULE ENDOSCOPY INFORMATION

A capsule endoscopy is where a pill sized video capsule, is swallowed. The capsule slowly travels through your digestive system, the same as food would normally travel. This capsule is disposable and usually passed within 24 to 48 hours.

The capsule has its own built-in light and camera to take pictures of the inside of your small bowel. 2 – 4 images are taken per second for up to 8 hours. The images are transmitted to a radio recorder (a walkman like device) that is worn around your waist. You should not remove the belt at any time during the procedure.

This procedure is safe, easy to do, non-invasive and permits examination of the entire small bowel that is not easily reached by other imaging methods. It does not require sedation as the procedure is painless.

The capsule does have some limitation in that it can only view what the problems may be. It does not allow any treatment such as removing a polyp. A further endoscopy procedure or surgery will be required for this.

CAPSULE ENDOSCOPY PROCEDURE

WHAT PREPARATION IS REQUIRED?

It is essential that your stomach is empty during the procedure to ensure the doctor has a clear view. You should have **NIL BY MOUTH FROM 10PM** (no food, fluids, water, chewing gum or smoking) for a morning procedure. You should take your normal medication with a sip of water. You should wear a light weight cotton singlet or T-shirt that covers your abdomen, so that the monitoring belt can be placed over this to avoid skin contact.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I ARRIVE?

When you arrive one of the reception staff will meet you. You will be asked to take a seat in the waiting room. A staff member will take your medical details to ensure you are correctly and safely prepared. This time gives you an opportunity to ask any questions you may have regarding the procedure. You will be shown and dressed in the monitoring belt and data recorder unit. You will then be asked to swallow the capsule with a mouthful of water.

WILL I BE ASLEEP FOR THE PROCEDURE?

No sedation is required as the procedure is painless.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE PROCEDURE?

Once you have swallowed the capsule you will remain nil by mouth for **2 hours**. You will then be allowed to drink clear fluids such as water or cordial. **4 Hours** after swallowing the capsule you will be allowed to have a light lunch. You will be allowed home immediately after swallowing the capsule. You must return after **8 hours** to have the belt removed and the images processed. You should not have a Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) examination or be in the vicinity of an MRI machine for 30days after ingesting the capsule unless confirmation is obtained that the capsule has been expelled from the body.

HOW DO I GET THE RESULTS?

The results take a few hours to process. The report will be sent to your referring doctor within a fortnight and a copy retained in your patient notes. Normally the referring doctor will discuss the results with you so you should make an appointment to see the referring doctor about a fortnight after your procedure. The referring doctor may be your GP or a specialist.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS INVOLVED FROM A CAPSULE ENDOSCOPY?

Before you agree to this procedure you should be aware of the reason for which it is being proposed, the alternatives and the problems that can occur. No treatment or procedure is totally risk free, but routine capsule enteroscopy is extremely safe.

The main complications following a capsule enteroscopy are mentioned below:-

1. There is a very small risk of the capsule getting stuck in the bowel if a narrowing is present (approximately 1 in 200). This is not always known before the procedure. If the capsule did get stuck you may require an operation.
2. There is also a risk if the patient is unable to swallow the capsule or the capsule gets stuck in the oesophagus requiring endoscopic retrieval.
3. In about 20% of people (2 in every 10 patients) the capsule does not reach the large intestine before the end of the procedure. This means that there is some intestine that has not been photographed and so it is impossible to be sure that something has not been missed.
4. The capsule sends the pictures to the recorder via an electronic signal. There are no concerns identified that this in any way affects other implantable electronic devices (eg pacemaker) but please notify your doctor if you would like to discuss this further.

COVID-19 alert

If you experience any fever, respiratory symptoms or generally feel unwell please postpone your procedure until you feel well again, the current recommendation is 14 days after you feel well again.