Endoscopy department

Gastroscopy

Important information

Before your appointment

- All medications should be taken as normal with a little water.
- If you take Warfarin please read the Alert for patients on Warfarin on page 2 as you may need to have an INR test seven days before your procedure.
- If you have diabetes please read the advice on page 6 and 7.
- If you have any questions about the procedure or find that you cannot keep this appointment, please contact the endoscopy office between 9:00 and 17:00 Monday to Friday on 01223 257080.

On the day

- Have nothing to eat for six hours and nothing to drink for four hours before your appointment.

At the hospital

- Please come to the endoscopy department on level 3 of the Addenbrooke’s Treatment Centre (ATC).
- Use the ‘Car Park 2’. Take your parking ticket and appointment letter to the ATC reception desk to obtain discounted parking.
- Please note that the appointment time is for your pre procedure check, not the time of your examination. The length of time you will be here will vary enormously but may be anything from one to two hours or more. Please ask your admitting nurse for further information during your admission check.
Alert for Endoscopy patients on Warfarin or Clopidogrel or other anticoagulant medication

You **must** read this guidance before your procedure.

If you have any questions or do not know whether to stop your medication before your endoscopy please phone 01223 216515

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Warfarin: for patients advised to continue medication</th>
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<tr>
<td>• You should have an <strong>INR test seven days</strong> before the endoscopy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• If that <strong>INR result</strong> is <strong>3.0 or less</strong>, continue with your usual daily Warfarin dose.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• If that <strong>INR result</strong> is <strong>more than 3.0</strong>, ask your supervising anticoagulant service for advice to <strong>reduce your daily Warfarin dose</strong> so that your INR is 3.0 or less when you have the endoscopy.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Warfarin: for patients advised to stop medication</th>
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<tr>
<td>• You should <strong>stop Warfarin five days</strong> before the endoscopy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• After the Endoscopy go back to your usual daily dose as soon as you are eating again (that will usually be the same evening).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• You should have your INR checked one week later to ensure you are adequately anticoagulated again.</td>
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<td>If you have:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• metal mitral valve</td>
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<td>• metal valve + previous stroke/thrombosis</td>
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<td>• valvular heart disease</td>
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<td>you may need Heparin injections instead of Warfarin. Ask your local anticoagulant service for advice.</td>
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<th>Clopidogrel : for patients advised to continue medication</th>
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<td>• Continue with your usual dose.</td>
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<th>Clopidogrel : for patients advised to stop medication</th>
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<tr>
<td>• You should stop <strong>Clopidogrel seven days</strong> before the endoscopy.</td>
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<th>Other anticoagulant medication :</th>
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<tr>
<td>Acenocoumarol, sinthrome, phenindione, dindevan: If you are taking any of these please contact the endoscopy department 01223 216515</td>
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What is a gastroscopy?
Your doctor has requested this procedure to help investigate and manage your medical condition.

Gastroscopy is an examination of the upper gut, which is the oesophagus (gullet), the stomach and duodenum (part of the small intestine joining the stomach). The procedure involves passing a narrow flexible instrument through the mouth, into the gullet (oesophagus) and then into the stomach and duodenum to examine the lining. This allows us to see if there are any problems such as ulcers or inflammation. The procedure can take between five and 15 minutes. If it takes longer please do not worry.

Sometimes it is helpful to take a biopsy – a sample of the lining. A small instrument called forceps passes through the gastroscope to ‘pinch’ out a tiny bit of the lining (about the size of a pinhead). This is sent to the laboratory for analysis. Most people find this completely painless.

Getting ready for the procedure
Wear loose fitting washable clothing and leave valuables at home.

On arrival at the department, we will explain the procedure to you and ask you to sign a consent form. You can change your mind about having the procedure at any time.

Sedatives
For many people a gastroscopy is only minimally uncomfortable and sedation is not required. If you are worried about potential discomfort or would like sedation for other reasons then you can ask for it.

There are two options for this procedure:

1. No sedation option: we will spray a local anaesthetic to the back of your throat. This will make it numb so that you cannot feel the gastroscope. The numbness will last for about half an hour.
   - The advantage is that you can leave as soon as the procedure is finished and you have talked to the endoscopist. You may resume your normal activities such as working and driving. You will be fully aware of the procedure; most patients find this acceptable.

2. Intravenous sedation option: We will give you a sedative (by injection into a vein) to make you feel relaxed and sleepy. The sedative will not put you to sleep (this is not a general anaesthetic). This option means you may not be aware of the procedure.
The disadvantages to this option are:

- You will need to stay whilst you recover which may take up to an hour or more.
- You will need to be escorted home.
- The injection may continue to have a mild sedative effect for up to 24 hours and may also leave you unsteady on your feet for a while.

If you choose sedation you must arrange for a responsible adult to come with you, wait to take you home. You will not be able to drive yourself. If you come without an escort, we will have to cancel the procedure. If you are entitled to use hospital transport, an escort is not required.

What happens during the procedure

In the procedure room, we will ask you to remove false teeth, glasses and hearing aids in the left ear. We will make you comfortable on a couch lying on your left side. The endoscopist will give you the injection or throat spray. We will put a plastic guard into your mouth so that you do not bite and damage our instrument. We will also put a plastic ‘peg’ on your finger to monitor your pulse and oxygen levels. For your comfort and reassurance, a trained nurse will stay with you throughout.

As the gastoscope goes through your mouth you may gag slightly, this is quite normal and will not interfere with your breathing. During the procedure, we will put some air into your stomach so that we have a clear view; this may make you burp and belch a little. This is also quite normal but some people find this unpleasant. We will remove the air at the end of the procedure.

Minimal restraint may be appropriate during the procedure. However if you make it clear that you are too uncomfortable the procedure will be stopped.

Potential risks

Diagnostic gastroscopy procedures carry a very small risk (one in 10,000 cases) of haemorrhage (bleeding) or perforation (tear) of the gut following which surgery may be necessary. There may be a slight risk to teeth, crowns or dental bridgework. You should tell the nurses if you have any of these. Other rare complications include aspiration pneumonia (inflammation of the lungs caused by inhaling or choking on vomit) and an adverse reaction to the intravenous sedative drugs.

Like all tests, this procedure will not always show up all abnormalities and, on very rare occasions, a significant abnormality may not be identified. If you have any questions about this please ask either at the time of the procedure or the person who referred you.

After the procedure

If you are given a throat spray you may go home immediately after the procedure. We advise you not to have anything to eat or drink until the numbness has worn off, which is usually about half an hour. After this, you can eat and drink normally.
If you have **sedation**, we will take you to a recovery area while the sedation wears off. We will always do our best to respect your privacy and dignity, for example with the use of curtains. If you have any concerns, please speak to the department sister or charge nurse.

When you are sufficiently awake, we will give you a drink, you can then go home. We advise you not to drive, operate machinery, return to work, drink alcohol or sign any legally binding documents for a 24-hour period after the procedure. We also advise you to have a responsible adult stay with you for the next 12 hours.

Afterwards, the back of your throat may feel sore for the rest of the day and you may feel bloated if some of the air remains in your stomach. Both these discomforts will pass and need no medication.

If you experience any of the following please contact your GP, the endoscopy Department 01223 216515 or the Accident and Emergency department 01223 217118 for further advice:

- severe pain,
- black tarry stools
- persistent bleeding

**When do I know the result?**

The endoscopist will give you information about the procedure at the bedside in the recovery area but if you would like more privacy, we will take you to a separate room. If you had sedation, it is a good idea to have someone with you when you talk to the endoscopist because the sedation can affect your ability to remember the discussion.

Final results from biopsies will be given to you either by the healthcare professional who requested the procedure at a clinic appointment or by letter. These results can take several weeks to come through. You should discuss details of these results and any further treatment with that person.

**Alternatives:**

In some cases, depending on individual factors such as the symptoms present and the condition being investigated, there may be alternatives to having a gastroscopy. These may include:

- a barium meal or a CT scan

**For more information:**

- Contact the endoscopy office between 0900 and 1700 on 01223 216546.
- See [www.addenbrookes.org.uk/consent](http://www.addenbrookes.org.uk/consent)
Diabetic advice - morning appointment

Please follow these instructions if you have diabetes controlled with insulin or tablets.

If you have any questions related to your diabetes during this preparation, please contact your GP or the diabetes specialist nurse on 01223 245151 bleep 152078.

Food and drink
- Do not eat for six hours prior to your appointment.
- Do not drink for three hours prior to your appointment.
- Test your blood glucose regularly. If it drops below four, please treat with a sugary drink such as lucozade 100ml, apple or grape juice 200ml, until your level is five.
- After your procedure, you may eat and drink normally unless specifically told otherwise.

Insulin and tablets
Please adjust your normal insulin and tablet doses as instructed below.

If you take insulin once daily
- No change to insulin dose necessary.

If you take insulin twice daily
- Do not have your morning insulin. Bring it with you, plus something to eat.
- If you are able to eat before 11:00, have your normal morning dose with food.
- If you are able to eat after 11:00, have half your normal morning dose with food.
- Have your normal evening dose.

If you take insulin four times daily
- Do not have your morning insulin. Bring it with you, plus something to eat.
- If you are able to eat before 11:00, have your normal morning dose with food.
- If you are able to eat after 11:00, omit your breakfast dose and have your normal lunchtime dose with food.
- Have your normal tea time and bedtime evening doses.

If you take tablets for diabetes
- Do not have your morning diabetic tablets.
- After your procedure, re-start your tablets at the next dose time.
Diabetic advice - afternoon appointment

Please follow these instructions if you have diabetes controlled with insulin or tablets.

If you have any questions related to your diabetes during this preparation, please contact your GP or the diabetes specialist nurse on 01223 245151 bleep 152078

Food and drink

- Do not eat for six hours prior to your appointment.
- Do not drink for three hours prior to your appointment.
- Test your blood glucose regularly. If it drops below four, please treat with a sugary drink such as lucozade 100ml, apple or grape juice 200ml until your level is five.
- After your procedure you may eat normally unless specifically told otherwise.

Insulin and tablets

Please adjust your normal insulin and tablet doses as instructed below.

If you take insulin once daily

- No change to insulin dose necessary.

If you take insulin twice daily

- Have your normal morning insulin dose unless your breakfast is smaller than usual. If so reduce your normal dose by half.
- Have your normal evening dose.

If you take insulin four times daily

- Have your normal morning insulin.
- Do not have your lunchtime insulin.
- Have your normal tea time and bedtime evening doses.

If you take tablets for diabetes

- Do not have your morning diabetic tablets.
- After your procedure, re-start your tablets at the next dose time.
We are now a smoke-free site: smoking will not be allowed anywhere on the hospital site. For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169.

Other formats:

If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio, please ask the department where you are being treated, to contact the patient information team: patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk.

Please note: We do not currently hold many leaflets in other languages; written translation requests are funded and agreed by the department who has authored the leaflet.

Document history
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Contact number
01223 245151
Publish/Review date
October 2015/October 2018
File name
PIN0658_Gastroscopy_V8
Version number/Ref
V8/PIN0658