



# Information for patients having a Gastroscopy



This leaflet has been prepared to enable you to make an informed decision when you are asked to give consent to the procedure. If you find you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Day Surgery Unit on **01935 384339**, or you can speak to the nurse or endoscopist when you arrive.

A gastroscopy involves passing a small scope (tube) over your tongue, down your throat and into your stomach. This is a flexible tube with a light and a camera in its tip. When air is put into the stomach, the doctor can examine the lining and take small samples (biopsies).

### **Important**

If your appointment is in the morning, it is essential that you have **NOTHING** to eat from midnight the night before your appointment.

If your appointment is after midday, have a light breakfast, eg. cereal or toast before 7am and **NOTHING** to eat after that.

If your appointment is after 5pm, have a light lunch before mid-day and **NOTHING** to eat after that.

Please do not wear any type of false nails or nail varnish, as it interferes with vital signs monitoring.

**You may drink clear fluids up to 4 hours before your appointment time.**

For your own safety it is important that your stomach is empty at the time of examination. Any food or drink taken within this time will stimulate your stomach to make acid which could damage your lungs if inhaled during the examination.

## Medication

- If you are a **DIABETIC** on medication, please follow the enclosed information. If you are unsure what to do please contact the Diabetic Sisters on **01935 384517** for advice before your admission.
- If you take medication for your stomach, please stop taking these 1 week before your appointment, unless you have been specifically asked to continue.

eg. **Omeprazole (Losec, Mepradec)**  
**Pantoprazol (Protium)**  
**Rabeprazole (Pariet)**  
**Lansoprazole (Zoton)**  
**Esomeprazole (Nexium, Emozul)**  
**Cimetidine (Tagamet)**  
**Famotidine (Pepcid)**  
**Nizatidine (Axid) or**  
**Rantidine (Zantec)**

- If you are taking medication to stop your blood clotting eg. warfarin, clopidogrel, dabigatran, please contact us as soon as you receive your appointment
- All other medication should be taken as prescribed. Small sips of water can be taken with medication only
- If you are having Chemotherapy please inform us on receipt of this letter

## What to bring with you

You may want to bring a book or something to read, you should expect to spend up to 2 hours with us but delays do occur. Remember, your appointment time is not the time of your examination, we also look after emergencies and these take priority on our lists. You do not have to change your clothes so nothing else is required. Please leave any valuables at home.

## **What happens when you arrive**

Your details will be taken and checked by our receptionist. You will be shown to our lounge or a cubicle and a nurse will take your blood pressure and ask you some questions about your health.

## **Consent**

A doctor or nurse will come and explain the examination and answer any questions you may have.

We do have a small number of trainee endoscopists in the department, who work under direct supervision from an experienced endoscopist.

## **Risks**

Complications, although rare, can occur with this procedure.

These include:

- Bleeding from the site of a tissue sample (biopsy)
- A perforation or tear of the gut wall, this could require an operation to repair
- An allergic reaction to the medication
- Infection

The endoscopist will speak to you before the procedure, so please feel free to ask any questions.

## **The examination**

A gastroscopy can be performed either with a local anaesthetic throat spray or light sedation. The choice is yours, but the following should be considered:

**Throat spray** - this will numb the back of your throat making it more comfortable to swallow the tube. The throat spray will wear off completely within an hour and you will be able to eat and drink with

no further effects.

**Sedation** - this will be given via a needle in your hand or arm. The sedation will relax you and may make you drowsy but will not put you to sleep. You will hear what is said to you and be able to respond to any instructions given to you.

The sedation will affect your judgement, memory and reflexes for up to 24 hours. As with any other medication, there is a small risk of an adverse reaction to the sedation. A nurse will attach monitors for recording your pulse. Oxygen will be administered throughout the examination if you have sedation.

You will be asked to lie on your left side and a mouth-guard will be placed in your mouth to enable the scope to pass through. A nurse will remain with you to reassure you, to suck out any secretions from your mouth, and tell you what you need to do and what to expect.

### **After the procedure**

- If you have a throat spray, you are able to leave after checking with the ward nurse for any further instructions. You must wait about 30-40 minutes before having a drink to make sure the effects of the throat spray have gone - always start with water
- If you have sedation, you will have to stay with us for up to 2 hours after the procedure. You **MUST** be accompanied home and have some one stay with you for the first 12 hours. The effects of the sedative can last up to 24 hours so you should not drive, operate machinery or drink alcohol during that time. We advise that you arrange alternative care for young children or elderly relatives for 24 hours after having sedation
- The endoscopist will inform you of the test results on the day of your examination but if any samples have been taken, these results may not be available for 1-2 weeks

- It is important that you recognise the early signs of complications and contact your doctor if you have severe pain, difficulty in swallowing, vomiting, fever, chills or black stools

**If a follow up appointment is necessary, it will be sent to you.**

### **Frequently asked questions:**

#### **When can I eat and drink?**

If you have had throat spray for your procedure, it will take 30 minutes for your swallowing to return to normal. After this time you may have a cool drink - you are at risk of burning yourself with a hot drink. You may eat and drink normally after this time. Your throat may feel a bit sore. If you have had sedation, you may eat and drink when you feel safe to do so.

#### **When can I go back to work?**

This depends whether you have had sedation or throat spray during your procedure. We advise that you refrain from work for 24 hours if you have had sedation. You must not operate machinery and your car insurance will not cover you to drive during this time. If you have had throat spray you may return to work when you feel safe to do so.

#### **Will I be told any results after the procedure?**

The endoscopist will speak to you after the procedure and explain any results to you. We will discuss the follow-up plan of care. We will give you a copy of your endoscopy report and a patient care report to explain any findings and give you advice for the next 24 hours.

**If you require further information or advice, please contact:**

**Day Surgery Unit**

between 8am and 7pm

**01935 384339**

**The Senior Sister on duty (Clinical Site Manager)**

after 7pm

**01935 384525**