

Capsule Endoscopy

A Guide to the Procedure

Please read all your information leaflets as they give you instructions you will need to follow.

(Eastern services)

Other formats

If you need this leaflet in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service:

- 01392 402093 (for Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter services)
- 01271 314090 (for North Devon services)
- rduh.pals@nhs.net

What is capsule endoscopy?

A capsule endoscopy is a procedure in which you swallow a capsule that takes thousands of photographs as it passes through your stomach and bowels.

For this test we are only usually looking at the small bowel. It is likely that you have already had endoscopic examinations and/or scans of your large bowel and stomach.

Current medication

You are advised to bring with you a list of all your current medication to your appointment.

Preparation

Your small bowel needs to be empty and clear of all faecal matter to enable us to have a good view of the lining. You have been sent sachets of bowel preparation (strong laxative) which will cause the bowel to empty.

Please follow the instructions below carefully to ensure a good result which is essential for a successful examination.

7 days before your capsule endoscopy:

- Stop taking any iron tablets or medications to control diarrhoea.
- Aspirin, Warfarin, Clopidogrel or any other blood thinner (anticoagulant or antiplatelet medication) does not need to be discontinued.
- If you are diabetic and want advice about managing the bowel preparation and/or diet please talk to your G.P. or practice nurse or, alternatively, telephone the endoscopy unit on **01392 402400**.
- If you have an implanted device such as a pacemaker or heart defibrillator, please phone the Endoscopy Unit on **01392 402400**.
- You may continue to take any other medications

3 days before your capsule endoscopy:

Follow the dietary advice detailed below. You can continue to eat but avoid high fibre foods and choose low fibre alternatives

✓ CHOOSE	X AVOID
Cereals: Cornflakes, Rice Krispies, Ricicles, Frosties, Sugar Puffs, Coco Pops	Wheat bran, All Bran, Weetabix, Shredded Wheat, oat bran, branflakes, wheatflakes, muesli, Ready Brek, porridge
Bread: White	Wholemeal, high fibre white, soft grain or granary bread, oat bread
Pasta: White	Wholemeal pasta, brown rice
Flour: White	Wholemeal, granary flour or wheatgerm
Savouries: chicken, turkey, fish, cheese and eggs	All red meats
Puddings, pastries, cakes, etc: milk puddings, mousse, sponge cakes, madeira cake, rich tea or wafer biscuits	Those containing wholemeal flour, oatmeal, nuts, dried fruit, etc. e.g. fruit cake, Ryvita, digestive or Hobnob biscuits
Preserve and sweets: sugar, seedless/pip-less jam, shredless marmalade, honey, lemon curd, boiled sweets, glucose tablets, mints	Jam or marmalade with pips, seeds or skins, sweets and chocolates containing fruit and/or nuts, muesli/cereal bars
Soups: clear or sieved soups	Chunky vegetable, lentil or bean soups
Miscellaneous: salt, pepper, vinegar, mustard, salad cream, mayonnaise	Nuts, Quorn, ground peppercorns, hummus

1 day before your capsule endoscopy:

- After 12:00 (midday) you should stop eating and drink only clear fluids (see list on page 3).
- At 16:00 make up a sachet of your bowel preparation (.....) in accordance with the instructions on the packet and drink over the period of the next hour. You may wish to add a cordial or fruit squash.

If you have been sent two sachets of bowel preparation:

- At 18:00 make up the second sachet of your bowel preparation (.....) and drink as before.

You will experience a period of frequent bowel actions and diarrhoea.

At midnight:

Stop drinking, except for a small amount of water with your usual medications if needed.

Clear liquids

The following are suitable clear liquids to drink from midday to midnight on the day before your capsule endoscopy:

- Water
- Clear fruit juices
- Black tea or coffee (no milk or soy milk)
- Lucozade
- Barley sugar
- Clear broth
- Clear fruit cordials

The day of your capsule endoscopy

You have been asked to attend for an early appointment. This is to maximise the amount of time available for the capsule to pass through your bowel. When you arrive a member of the capsule team will explain the procedure and complete some paperwork and computer work. You will be given the opportunity to ask questions before signing the consent form.

Please keep jewellery to a minimum. If at all possible, only wear wedding bands to avoid loss or damage. Please do not bring excessive amounts of money with you.

If you are diabetic or you are taking certain painkillers, you may need an injection to help the stomach empty quicker. This is given intramuscularly at the time you swallow the capsule.

You will be expected to wear a belt and carry a small lightweight data recorder. Loose separates are likely to be the most comfortable for you. Belts with metal buckles should be avoided.

You do not need to stay in the endoscopy unit during the day of the test and you are free to return home. Unfortunately, we do not have suitable waiting facilities in the department.

You will be advised of the time you should return to the endoscopy unit to have the equipment removed. This is usually around 17:30 - 18:00.

Please be advised that if you are relying on community or hospital transport you are unlikely to be able to request two return journeys on the same day. Please tell the nurse on arrival that you are using community transport.

During the capsule endoscopy try to avoid any strenuous physical activity. Please do not bend or stoop excessively during the test. You should not go near any source of powerful electromagnetic fields, such as an MRI scanner or amateur radio transmitter.

Airport security should also be avoided for up to two weeks after the test. If you are travelling by air up to two weeks after the appointment, please advise us so that we may alter your appointment.

Eating and Drinking

After swallowing the capsule:

- You must not eat or drink anything for up to 3 hours
- Clear fluids are permitted for a further 2 hours
- A light lunch can be eaten around 13:00, with a normal diet resuming thereafter

Returning to the unit

You will be able to go home immediately after the equipment has been removed. The capsule will pass in your motions and into the toilet. You do not need to retrieve the capsule and it can be safely flushed away.

Results

The results of the capsule endoscopy will usually be sent to your referring doctor within 2-3 weeks.

Risks

Capsule endoscopy is a safe test. There is a small risk that the capsule may become stuck in the small bowel due to a pre-existing narrowing (1 in 150 patients). If this occurs the capsule may eventually pass naturally, but urgent treatment or even an operation may be needed to remove the capsule.

Sometimes we can tell from your medical history if the capsule is likely to get stuck. In this instance you will be offered a different test first.

The capsule will pass into your motions and into the toilet. This usually happens within 48 hours of swallowing the capsule, but for some people it can take a little longer.

If after two weeks you are convinced the capsule has not passed, please contact the endoscopy unit on **01392 402400** to receive advice.

Endoscopy Unit Helpline

If you have any further questions regarding either the bowel preparation, including possible side effects, or any other aspect of the procedure, please contact the helpline on **01392 402400**. The opening hours are Monday to Saturday from 8am to 6pm. If you have an urgent query outside of these hours, please ring your GP or telephone **111**.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern, please contact PALS:

- 01392 402093 (for Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter services)
- 01271 314090 (for North Devon services)
- rduh.pals@nhs.net

Have your say

Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

You can also share your feedback on the Care Opinion website at www.careopinion.org.uk or freephone 0800 122 3135.



Scan the QR code to visit the Care Opinion website →

Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
www.royaldevon.nhs.uk

Eastern services
Barrack Road, Exeter
Devon EX2 5DW
Tel: 01392 411611

Northern services
Raleigh Park, Barnstaple
Devon EX31 4JB
Tel. 01271 322577

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