

Once home it is important to rest quietly for the remainder of the day. You may resume your normal diet and prescription medication unless otherwise instructed by the doctor.

### Concerns

If you have any queries regarding the procedure, you should contact the endoscopy unit between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday and the nursing staff will be happy to give you information or advice. Outside these hours you should contact your own GP, or speak to the accident and emergency department at Bedford Hospital. Alternatively you can contact NHS Direct and nursing staff there should be able to help you with any queries.

### Contact us

**Bedford Hospital: 01234 355122**

**Endoscopy unit: 01234 792269**

**NHS Direct: 0845 4647**

# Endoscopy

## Having a Gastroscopy



**This leaflet provides information about your procedure, why you have been recommended to have a gastroscopy and what you can expect before, during and after the procedure.**

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Gastroscopy is a procedure, which allows the doctor to examine your oesophagus (gullet), stomach and the first part of your small bowel. A long thin flexible tube with a small video chip built into it's tip, called an endoscope is used for this procedure.

## Before your examination

You must not have anything to eat or drink for **six hours before the examination**. If you have a morning appointment please do not take your medication on the morning of the procedure. Please bring all your regular medication with you (see enclosed letter if diabetic.)

If you have an afternoon appointment please take your regular medication with a light breakfast. Please bring a list of the medication with you to the hospital. If you are taking Warfarin or Aspirin tablets or have any other concerns please contact the endoscopy department upon receiving your appointment.

## Throat spray or sedation

You will be given a choice of whether you wish to have the examination performed with a local anaesthetic spray or sedated. If you wish to have the examination performed under local anaesthetic the doctor will spray the back of your throat to make it all numb which helps reduce your gag reflex prior to the doctor passing the endoscope down into your gullet. Once the procedure is complete you will be able to eat and drink within twenty minutes. You will then be able to leave the endoscopy unit unaccompanied, as you will be awake throughout the procedure.

Sedation will involve giving you an injection that may make you drowsy during and after the procedure. Once the procedure is complete the nurses will monitor you until you are fully awake (minimum of an hour). The nurse will advise you when you can eat and drink. You may need to wait until the end of the list to speak to the doctor.

## What the examination involves

The endoscope is passed over the back of the tongue, down the throat and into the stomach and first part of the small bowel, called the Duodenum. During the procedure the doctor may take a small sample of tissue to check for any infection or inflammation. This is called a biopsy.

If the doctor finds a narrowed area in your oesophagus, called a stricture, which may be causing difficulties in swallowing, it may be possible to provide treatment at the same as the endoscopy. This would involve passing a small balloon down the scope to help dilate the stricture, an alternative is to use a slightly larger tube through the mouth which will stretch the narrowed area and relive swallowing difficulties.

## Risks

When a biopsy is taken from the lining of the stomach there is a very small risk that bleeding may occur. Usually this will stop by itself. If bleeding continues you may have to stay in hospital to be observed until the bleeding stops. When a stricture is found and dilated during endoscopy there is a very slight risk that a leakage may occur at the site being treated (less than 1%). If this occurs you would have to stay in hospital. Very occasionally an operation may be required to repair any leakage.

## Results

If you have the throat spray the doctor will talk to you at the end of the procedure to explain what has been found. If you have had sedation you will need to wait until either the end of the list or an appropriate time when the doctor is able to speak to you. The results of the biopsies will take several days to be processed and therefore a further outpatient appointment is sometimes necessary, the doctor will let you know.

If you have any questions about the Gastroscopy examination please ask one of our nurses. The doctor will speak to you before the procedure and will be available to answer any additional questions.

## Going home

If you have had throat spray you can carry on your day as normal.

The effects of sedation can last for 24 hours so you should not undertake the following for 24 hours following your procedure.

- Drive a car;
- Operate machinery;
- Drink alcohol;
- Sign any legally binding documents;
- Be in charge of any young children.

It is essential if you have had sedation that someone comes into the endoscopy unit to collect you, and stays with you for 24 hours. If this is not possible please contact the endoscopy unit before your procedure to discuss this.