

# Gastroscopy / OGD

**This leaflet explains about your gastroscopy and how to prepare for this procedure including when to stop eating and what medications you may need to stop. It also covers what you can expect when you come to hospital.**

**It is very important that no food or milk is consumed in the six hour period prior to your examination.**

**If you have been sent a consent form for gastroscopy / OGD, please read this and bring the signed document with you to your appointment.**

Gastroscopy procedures are booked at one of our three endoscopy sites: The Endoscopy Unit at St George's Hospital, the Day Case Unit at Queen Mary's Hospital, Roehampton or at the Nelson Health Centre. Please refer to your appointment letter / appointment text for the location of your procedure.

St George's is a national training centre for endoscopy. Students and qualified trainees may be involved in your care. If you do not want students to be present, please inform the doctor or nurse when you are admitted.

## What is gastroscopy?

Gastroscopy, also referred to as an OGD (OesophagoGastroDuodenoscopy) is a camera examination via the mouth to the inside of the stomach. This can help to find the cause of your abdominal symptoms and to diagnose and sometimes treat diseases of the upper intestine. The time taken to perform the procedure is variable but most gastroscopies are completed within 5 to 10 minutes. However, please allow up to three hours in the hospital for the whole process to be completed. We recommend that you bring a book or magazine with you to read whilst you are waiting.

The procedure is tolerated by many without sedation, however if you prefer a mild sedative, please ensure you read the section under "What happens after gastroscopy?"

## What are the risks?

This procedure is very safe but there is a small risk of causing a potential complication:

- The sedative can affect your breathing making it slow and shallow, however you will be closely monitored throughout the procedure and in recovery.

- There is a risk of dislodging loose teeth, crowns and bridgework but this is rare.
- There is overall less than a 1:2,000 risk of causing significant bleeding. Minor bleeding is to be expected when biopsies are taken and this bleeding usually stops spontaneously. If bleeding does not stop spontaneously, it can usually be treated by the endoscopist during the procedure.
- The risk of causing a perforation (unwanted tear in the upper digestive tract) is less than 1:3,000. If a perforation occurs at the time of endoscopy, admission to hospital and treatment with antibiotics may be required.
- If significant bleeding and / or a perforation cannot be treated by the endoscopist at the time of the procedure, further intervention, including radiological embolisation (to stop bleeding) or surgery may be required.
- There is a small risk of an abnormality being missed.
- On occasion, it will not be possible to complete the procedure. If this occurs, you may be offered the opportunity to have the procedure repeated on another day or an alternative investigation may be suggested.

## Are there any alternatives?

There are some alternatives to gastroscopy but these are not suitable for all patients. Your clinician will discuss this with you if appropriate.

## How can I prepare for gastroscopy?

- A clear view of the stomach is required for this examination to be successful and so it must be as empty as possible. It is vitally important to follow the advice given about preparation. This is detailed below.
- **DO NOT EAT FOR SIX HOURS** before your appointment. You are allowed clear fluids (no milk) up until two hours before your appointment.
- **STOP DRINKING CLEAR FLUID TWO HOURS** before your appointment.
- If you are diabetic or taking blood thinning medications such as Warfarin, Apixaban, Rivaroxaban, Dabigatran, Clopidogrel, Ticagrelor or Prasugrel, a nurse will call you with instructions on how to manage your medications. If you have not been contacted shortly before your appointment, please contact us on the telephone numbers of page 5 of this leaflet under **Contact us**.
- The procedure may be affected if you are taking certain medications for the stomach.

If this is the **first time** you are having this procedure, we recommend that you stop taking the following drugs for two weeks before your test: Ranitidine (Zantac), Lansoprazole (Zoton), Omeprazole (Losec), Pantoprazole (Protium), Esomeprazole (Nexium). This is so we can fully assess how your symptoms are affecting you.

- If you have been told that you have Barrett's Oesophagus or booked for a repeat procedure to check for healing of an ulcer, please **DO NOT** stop taking the tablets for your stomach listed above.

- Take other medications as normal.
- Please bring a list of your regular medications and any inhalers or sprays with you.
- If you object to receiving blood products, we need to know in advance so please contact us on the telephone numbers on page 5 of this leaflet under **Contact us**.

## Advice for diabetic patients

The period of starvation can upset your diabetes temporarily. For further advice about your diabetes, please contact us on the phone numbers on page 5 of this leaflet under **Contact us**. Alternatively, you may wish to contact your diabetic nurse.

## What happens on the day of the procedure?

### On arrival at the endoscopy unit

- A nurse will check your details, including medications and allergies.
- If you have already signed the consent form, you will have the opportunity to ask any final questions with the endoscopist before the procedure. If you have not yet signed the form, the procedure will be explained, and you will be asked to sign a consent form.

## What happens during gastroscopy?

- A numbing anaesthetic spray will be applied to the back of your throat to reduce the gag reflex, the effects of which normally last 30 minutes.
- If you have chosen to have sedation, the sedative injection is given. It makes you relaxed but usually not asleep. It can in some patients affect memory of the procedure. Many patients choose not to have the sedation as the procedure is usually easily tolerated.
- An alternative to sedation is an inhaled short-acting pain relief called Entonox (also known as 'gas and air' or 'laughing gas') which can be given before the start of the procedure only. If you have Entonox, you will be able to go home 30 minutes after the procedure unaccompanied. Please note that Entonox is not suitable for all patients including those taking Methotrexate or with certain lung conditions or who have had certain eye / ear procedures. For more information about Entonox, please go to the link on the St George's Hospital website: [GAS\\_ENTO.pdf \(stgeorges.nhs.uk\)](https://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/what-to-expect/gastroscopy/gas-entox.pdf)
- The gastroscope is gently inserted via your mouth into your stomach. This is not painful and will not make breathing or swallowing difficult but you may feel bloated and it can make you belch and gag. Careful continued slow breathing (through mouth or nose) may alleviate any discomfort. The nurse may need to clear saliva from your mouth using a small suction tube. If you gag you won't vomit as your stomach will be empty.
- A biopsy (tissue sample) is usually taken during this test. You cannot feel this.

## **What happens after gastroscopy?**

Most patients can go home immediately after the procedure, however if you have had Entonox or sedation, you will be taken to the recovery area where you will be monitored for 30 to 45 minutes. A nurse will give you a copy of the endoscopy report as well as some important discharge advice. A normal diet can be resumed 30 minutes after the procedure is complete.

If you have had sedation, you will not be allowed to drive and must arrange for someone to accompany you home. The medication given will prohibit you from driving for 24 hours after the examination. Please do not plan to take public transport home unless accompanied.

If you are unable to arrange transportation, we can arrange a taxi to take you home however you are responsible for the fare. You will need a responsible adult at home for at least 12 hours.

If you have had no sedation or Entonox you can leave unaccompanied.

## **Asking for your consent and signing the consent form**

It is important that you feel involved in decisions about your care. If you have been sent a consent form with your appointment letter, please take the time to read this before your appointment. If you agree with and understand the procedure you are attending for, please sign the consent form and bring it with you to the appointment. You will have the opportunity to ask any questions before the procedure.

If you have not received the consent form, the information will be explained, and you will be asked to sign a consent form before your procedure.

You can withdraw your consent at any time, even if you have said 'yes' previously. If you would like more details about our consent process, please ask for a copy of our policy.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **Will I feel any pain?**

You may feel some discomfort from the air that is pumped into the stomach and it may make you belch or gag. It should not hurt. Taking slow, deep breaths throughout the procedure will help you retain the air and may relieve the discomfort. Sedation can be given if you have an escort, this makes you feel relaxed. An alternative to sedation is Entonox (gas and air). As it is inhaled, it can only be given before the start of the procedure.

## Where do I go?

Please see your appointment letter for the location of your appointment and the hospital address below:

**St George's Hospital**, Blackshaw Road, London, SW17 0QT.

Please go to the Endoscopy Unit, First floor, St James' Wing.

**Queen Mary's Hospital**, Roehampton Lane, London, SW15 5PN.

Please present at the main reception and you will be directed to the Day Case Unit.

**Nelson Health Centre**, Kingston Road, London, SW20 8DA.

Please present at main reception and you will be directed to the Endoscopy unit.

## Is there parking at the hospital?

For St George's Hospital there is a car park with the entrance located on Blackshaw Road. Queen Mary's Hospital and the Nelson Hospital each have a car park on site. Please ensure you check the rates before parking.

## Results / Will I have a follow-up appointment?

Upon completion of the gastroscopy the findings will be discussed with you. We will be able to tell you of any visual findings, however any samples will be sent to the laboratory for testing. This can take up to four weeks. The report will be sent to your referring doctor and your GP. If required, a follow up appointment will be sent to you through the post.

## Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your procedure, please contact us:

**For appointments at St George's Hospital or the Nelson Health Centre call:**

The Endoscopy Unit on 020 8725 1913 Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

**For appointments at Queen Mary's Hospital call:**

The Day Case Unit on 020 8487 6466 Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

## Useful sources of information

[Gastroscopy - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk) for further information on gastroscopy.

**For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit, please visit**

[www.stgeorges.nhs.uk](http://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk)

## Preparation checklist

- Make a note of the date of your appointment.
- This procedure is usually well tolerated without sedation, however if you are planning to or have been advised to have sedation, arrange for a friend or relative (18 years of age or older) to escort you home after your appointment and be with you for at least 12 hours.
- If you are taking medications for diabetes or to prevent blood clots, please follow the instructions provided by the nurse. If you have not been contacted, please contact us.
- If this is the **first time** having this test please stop taking the following drugs for two weeks before your test: Ranitidine (Zantac), Lansoprazole (Zoton), Omeprazole (Losec), Pantoprazole (Protium), Esomeprazole (Nexium).
- STOP EATING SIX HOURS before your appointment, clear fluids are allowed up to two hours before your appointment.
- Bring your signed consent form with you to your appointment.

## Additional services

### Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or care. You can contact the PALS team on the advisory telephone line Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 2pm to 5pm.

A Walk-in service is available:

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday between 10am and 4pm

Friday between 10am and 2pm.

Please contact PALS in advance to check if there are any changes to opening times.

The Walk-in and Advisory telephone services are closed on Wednesdays.

PALS is based within the hospital in the ground floor main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough Wing.

**Tel:** 020 8725 2453 **Email:** [pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

### NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

**Web:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

## **NHS 111**

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

**Tel:** 111

## **AccessAble**

You can download accessibility guides for all our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website ([www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk)). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.



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