Small Bowel Capsule Endoscopy with PLENVU

This leaflet has two sections: The summary boxes below and section one provides important information about the procedure and medications you may need to stop. Section two explains how to prepare for this procedure, including when to stop eating and how to cleanse your bowel. It is important to read both sections to ensure that you are fully prepared for the procedure.

Small Bowel Capsule Endoscopies are carried out at the Endoscopy Unit, 1st floor St. James wing of St George's Hospital. Please refer to your appointment letter for the time and date. You will be contacted by one of our nursing team before your procedure, to record your health history and to advise on any changes to your medication.

Important information about your procedure

- St George's is a University Hospital and a National Training Centre for endoscopy, providing specialist training for qualified doctors and nurses developing skills in endoscopy. As part of this training, supervised specialist trainees may be involved in your care. If you would prefer trainees not to be present, please inform the doctor or nurse when you are admitted.
- **Three days before** your appointment, **start a low fibre diet** (found on page 4).
- **STOP EATING 24 HOURS before your appointment**, clear fluids are allowed (**no milk**).
- **Take the bowel preparation as per the instructions from page 5.**
- Continue to drink clear fluids up until your appointment time.

Important information about medication

- Seven days before the procedure, stop taking iron tablets.
- Four days before the procedure, stop taking constipating medicines such as Imodium (Loperamide), Lomotil, or codeine phosphate, or stool bulking laxatives such as Fybogel or Movicol. (If taking codeine-based medicines, please consult your GP to discuss if any alternatives are available).
- If you take **GLP-1 and/or GLP-3 and/or GIP blocker medication** such as Mounjaro, Wegovy, Ozempic, **please inform us.**
- Take all other medications as usual but do not take oral medications one hour before or one hour after taking the bowel preparation.
- If you are taking the contraceptive pill, please take additional precautions for one week following the bowel preparation.
- A telephone triage appointment will be made with you to discuss how to take the bowel preparation and which medications to omit during this time.

Section One

What is a small bowel capsule endoscopy?

A capsule endoscopy is a small (32mm x 0.5mm x 12mm) disposable capsule, roughly the size of a large vitamin capsule, which we will ask you to swallow with water. Prior to drinking this we will also ask you to drink a solution that dissolves any bubbles in the digestive juices (Simeticone) to allow a clear view of your bowel. The capsule contains a camera, light source, battery and transmitter, which work collectively to take images of the gut. The capsule travels naturally through the gastrointestinal tract into the small intestine and is passed in your faeces, when you open your bowels. The time this will take varies with each individual, do not worry if you do not see or feel it pass, we will know.

On the day, we will instruct you to wear a belt around your waist which connects to a data recorder that is stored in an easy to carry bag. This records the capsule's journey through the gastrointestinal tract. The recording is set for twelve hours to allow time for the capsule to pass through your gut.

Once you have swallowed the capsule you may leave the endoscopy unit and return home., Once the recording has finished, the data recorder will stop automatically; this will need to be returned to the Endoscopy Unit on the next working day.

For a successful examination, it is important that the small bowel is clear of waste material. If the bowel is not completely clear, it is possible to miss something and may require a repeat procedure.

Why do I need this test?

You have been advised to have this procedure so that we can examine the small intestine more carefully, to assess if there is a cause for your symptoms.

Are there any risks or side effects?

Capsule endoscopy is a diagnostic test. It is a safe and well-tolerated procedure. The main risk is capsule retention (where the capsule may not be expelled in the toilet), which occurs in less than 1% of cases. You are not expected to retrieve the capsule, although if you are worried that the capsule has not been excreted, please notify us and we will consider arranging an abdominal x-ray. Equally if we feel you have not passed the capsule within the 12-hour recording, we will contact you and arrange an x-ray.

On arrival at the endoscopy unit

Please report to Reception at the Endoscopy Unit, first floor St James Wing.

- If you wish to have someone with you during the examination, please bring a friend or family member, although it is not a requirement to have an escort as sedation is not required for this procedure.
- The doctor or nurse performing the test will explain the procedure and you will have the opportunity to ask any questions before you sign the consent form.

Please note: We recommend you wear loose-fitting, two-piece clothing, for example, jogging trousers with a baggy t-shirt to your appointment.

After the examination

You may resume normal activities following the test. However, you will need to follow the instructions below, regarding drinking and eating after the swallowing the capsule:

- **During the first two hours after swallowing the capsule,** drink water only.
- **Two to four hours after swallowing the capsule,** you can drink clear fluids only and at the end of this two-hour period, you may have a light snack.
- **6 hours after swallowing the capsule,** you may resume a normal diet.

Will I get the results / Will I have a follow-up appointment?

We are unable to inform you of any results on the day of the procedure. The recording will be reviewed, and the results will be sent to your GP and referring clinician within 4 weeks. If you do not have an appointment scheduled, please arrange an appointment to discuss these results. If there are any abnormalities or retention of the capsule, we will contact you directly via telephone.

Is there anything I need to watch out for after the procedure?

Once the capsule is swallowed you can continue with your normal daily function, although if you experience any **severe abdominal pain or vomiting,** please contact either our direct line, or the Endoscopy Unit, on the telephone numbers below under **Contact Us**. Outside of working hours, please go to your local Emergency department or alternatively, you can call your GP or NHS 111.

Where do I go?

Please attend the Endoscopy Unit, St George's Hospital, First floor, St James' Wing, Blackshaw Road, London, SW17 0QT (scan the QR code at the end of this leaflet for a map).

Parking at the hospital

At St George's Hospital, the car park entrance is located on Blackshaw Road. Please ensure you check the rates before parking.

Contact us

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

- Video Capsule Endoscopy Team Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm on 0208 725 2916.
- Endoscopy Unit Monday to Friday 8.30am to 3pm on 020 8725 1913.

We are sorry that you may experience a delay when contacting the Endoscopy Unit. Our team manages more than 300 patient bookings each week and our phone lines can be extremely busy. At peak times, you may wait up to 40 minutes for your call to be answered

Section Two

HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE PROCEDURE

It is important to reduce the amount of fibre you eat **before starting the bowel preparation.**
This means avoiding cereals, wholemeal bread, salads, fruits or any food containing nuts or seeds.

THREE DAYS BEFORE THE PROCEDURE, START A LOW FIBRE DIET

This table shows what foods you can eat and what you need to avoid before you start taking the bowel preparation. You must STOP EATING 24 hours before the procedure.

FOOD AND DRINK ALLOWED (up to 24 hours before appointment ONLY)	FOOD AND DRINK TO AVOID
✓ Lean beef, lamb, ham, veal, pork, chicken, bacon, plain meat pies	x Burgers, sausages, casseroles
✓ Fresh, tinned, smoked seafood (no bones, shell), fish with white breadcrumbs/batter	x Pies, pasties containing vegetables
✓ White rice, couscous, noodles, white pasta	x All peas, beans, pulses e.g. kidney, baked, lentils, hummus
✓ Peeled potatoes; boiled, baked or mashed	x Brown rice, brown pasta, quinoa, barley
✓ Well-cooked carrots/turnip/swede (no skin), cauliflower/broccoli florets (no stalks)	x Potato skins, chips, roasted potato
✓ Sieved tomato sauces (no skin or seeds), purée, tomato/brown/Worcestershire sauce	x Raw vegetables, salad, sweet corn, celery
✓ Plain gravy, cheese, sauce, plain mustard	x Fruit (fresh, dried, or tinned with pips)
✓ Eggs, soya, Quorn, tofu	x Packet soups or tinned soup with vegetables
✓ Clear or strained soups	x High fibre, wholemeal/multigrain breads
✓ Stewed/tinned fruit (no skin/seeds/pith/pips)	x Wholemeal cereals, cereals with nuts, seeds, or dried fruit
✓ Cornflakes, Rice Krispies, Cornflakes etc.	x Muesli, fruit and fibre, shredded wheat, bran flakes, porridge
✓ White bread, plain naan, chapatti, poppadum	x All nuts and seeds
✓ Rich Tea or other plain biscuits, crackers	x Yoghurt with whole fruit muesli, seeds
✓ Plain cakes, plain scones (no fruit or nuts)	x Digestives, Hob-nobs, oat cakes, flapjacks
✓ Butter, milk, cheese, dairy alternatives	x Wholegrain crackers, crackers with seeds
✓ Plain or fruit flavoured yoghurt (no bits)	x Cakes containing fruit, nuts, or coconut
✓ Jam, marmalade (no seeds, peel), marmite	x Jam or marmalade with skin/pips/seeds
✓ Jelly (green/yellow only), ice cream, custard	x Peanut butter
✓ Water, tea, coffee, fizzy drinks, clear fruit juice e.g. apple juice, Lucozade	x Cloudy juice, juice with bits, smoothies
	x Red or blackcurrant cordial/squash

Advice for diabetic patients

The bowel preparation can upset your diabetes temporarily. A nurse will contact you with advice on how to manage your diabetes whilst you are fasting. If you have not been contacted, please contact us on the telephone numbers on page 3 of this leaflet under **Contact us**, you may wish to speak to your diabetic nurse for advice.

FASTING AND PLENVU INSTRUCTIONS

It is very important you follow the instructions on the following pages to ensure your bowel is clear of stool and to enable the procedure to be successful.

DO NOT EAT FOOD FOR 24 HOURS BEFORE THE PROCEDURE

Please check your appointment time to see when to stop eating. During the fasting period, please **DRINK CLEAR FLUIDS ONLY.**

Clear fluids include:

Water, fizzy drinks, Lucozade, squash (not red or blackcurrant), clear soups, Bovril or broth, black tea and coffee (no milk) and jelly (green and yellow only).

Please follow the instructions on **page 7** (rather than the manufacturer's leaflet) and according to your appointment time. Helpful **Hints & Tips** when taking PLENVU can be found on the next page.

How to prepare PLENVU

PLENVU is a two-dose treatment. The pack contains three sachets: one 'Dose 1' sachet and two 'Dose 2' sachets marked A and B.

To make the first dose, mix the 'dose 1' sachet in 500mls of water. Stir until the powder has completely dissolved (this may take up to eight minutes). Each dose of PLENVU should be sipped slowly over 60 minutes, alternating with intermittent sips of water, followed by 500ml of mandatory clear fluid over a further 30 minutes.

To make the second dose, mix the 'dose 2' sachets A and B in 500mls of water. Stir until the powder has completely dissolved (this may take up to eight minutes). Again, this dose of PLENVU should be sipped slowly over 60 minutes, alternating with intermittent sips of water, followed by 500ml of mandatory clear fluid over a further 30 minutes. We recommend that you prepare each dose early and put it in the refrigerator as it is more tolerable when it is cold.

We understand that individual factors may impact the start time for each dose of PLENVU e.g. work or family commitments, distance to the hospital etc., therefore a range of times has been provided on page 7 to assist with this.

For early morning appointments before 9.30am, you may wish to start drinking the morning dose earlier to give you time to get to hospital.

For appointments after 3pm, you can take the second dose of PLENVU between 10-11am.
If you have had a previous incomplete capsule endoscopy due to poor bowel preparation or have chronic constipation, we recommend you take two Senna tablets for 5 nights before starting the PLENVU.

What to expect when taking PLENVU

Everybody responds differently to bowel cleansing. We advise you to remain in easy reach of a toilet as it causes multiple, often urgent, watery bowel movements. It can start working in as little as 30 minutes but may take up to three to four hours to start working in some people depending on your age, diet, if you have diabetes and whether you suffer from constipation. However, for most people the effect of the bowel preparation can be seen within an hour of completion of each dose. **Your bowel motions on completion of the preparation should be a clear/yellow watery consistency.**

PLENVU is easier to drink when it is cold. We recommend preparing both doses of PLENVU in advance and storing it in the refrigerator no more than 24 hours before you need to drink it. The PLENVU may make you feel nauseated or sick, feel tired, have abdominal bloating or cramps. If you feel nauseated, drink more water or other clear fluids, between sips and drink it slowly, walking around can also help. If you do not like the taste, try drinking it through a straw. The effects of the preparation may give you a sore bottom, so we suggest using a **barrier cream** as soon as you start drinking the PLENVU and soft flushable wipes.

If you are unable to tolerate the bowel preparation, vomit the contents, or if by the morning of the procedure you have had little or no result in the toilet, please Contact us on the phone numbers of page 3 of this leaflet, as it may not be possible to perform the procedure.



PLENVU - MORNING APPOINTMENTS

Suggested routine to follow the DAY BEFORE YOUR PROCEDURE	
Breakfast 7 to 9am	Eat a light breakfast but **avoid** high fibre foods, fruit, and vegetables. This will be the last solid meal until after your procedure. (See page 4)
9am **Stop eating and drink clear fluids**	**STOP EATING SOLID FOOD**. You can have water, squash, clear soups, jelly (yellow or green only), fizzy drinks, Lucozade, black tea, and coffee (no milk).
Lunch and Dinner **Clear fluids only**	You can have clear soups or broth such as Bovril or Oxo and jelly (yellow or green only). Remember to continue to drink plenty of clear fluids.
5 to 6pm	Make your **FIRST** dose of PLENVU 'Dose 1' and sip slowly over 60 minutes, alternating with sips of water. Remember to drink an additional 500ml of water over 30 minutes following this dose.
Clear Fluids only	Continue to drink clear fluids to stay hydrated.
Suggested routine to follow the DAY OF YOUR PROCEDURE	
5 to 6am (or earlier if desired)	Make your **SECOND** dose of PLENVU 'Dose 2' with sachets A & B and sip slowly over 60 minutes, alternating sips with water. Remember to drink an additional 500ml of water over 30 minutes following this dose.
Clear Fluids only	Continue to drink clear fluids until the capsule is swallowed.

PLENVU - AFTERNOON APPOINTMENTS

Suggested routine to follow the DAY BEFORE YOUR PROCEDURE	
Breakfast	Eat a light breakfast but **avoid** high fibre foods, fruits, and vegetables. (See page 4)
Lunch 12 noon	Eat a light lunch but **avoid** high fibre foods, fruits, and vegetables. This will be the last solid meal until after your procedure.
1pm **Stop eating and drink clear fluids**	**STOP EATING SOLID FOOD**. You can have water, squash, clear soups, jelly (yellow or green only), fizzy drinks, Lucozade, black tea, and coffee (no milk).
5 to 6pm	Make your **FIRST** dose of PLENVU 'Dose 1' and sip slowly over 60 minutes, alternating with sips of water. Remember to drink an additional 500ml of water over 30 minutes following this dose.
Dinner **Clear fluids only**	You can have clear soups or broth such as Bovril or Oxo and jelly (yellow or green only). Remember to continue to drink plenty of clear fluids.
Suggested routine to follow the DAY OF YOUR PROCEDURE	
8 to 9am	Make your **SECOND** dose of PLENVU 'Dose 2' and sip slowly over 60 minutes, alternating with sips of water. Please drink a further 500mls of water over 30 minutes following this dose.
Clear fluids only	Continue to drink clear fluids until the capsule is swallowed.

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 wings.

Tel: 020 8725 2453 Email: 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

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). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.

Scan here for a map on how to find the Endoscopy Unit at St George's Hospital

Scan here for a digital copy of this leaflet.

Reference: END_SBC_02 **Published:** October 2026 **Review date:** October 2028

This has been endorsed by the Patient Information Group PInG