

Endoscopy Service: Our Service FAQs

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



What do I do if I take Medicine to Thin the Blood?

If you take drugs such as aspirin, clopidogrel, warfarin, apixaban, dabigatran or other medicines that thin the blood you do **NOT** need to stop these for a routine endoscopy procedure such as a gastroscopy, flexible sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy. However, if you are having a more specialist procedure such as having a feeding tube inserted (PEG), a dilatation of a stricture, polyp or potential polyp removal or HALO then you will need to stop the medications that thin the blood. In this instance or if you are uncertain, please contact the endoscopy department.

Why do I have to arrive so early?

The time that you are given is the time that you will be admitted into the department, it is not the procedure time.



Why does it take 2 - 4 hours?

The appointment time is measured from the time you register at Endoscopy reception to your departure from the department. It includes pre procedure checks, the time you spend waiting for the examination, the time the actual examination takes, the time you need to recover from it and the time taken getting yourself ready to go home.

How long should I allow for my Appointment in Endoscopy?

You need to allow between 2 - 4 hours.



How long does the examination take?

The actual time spent on an examination varies between patients and examinations. In general, an examination of the stomach (gastroscopy) will take 5-15 minutes, a flexible sigmoidoscopy takes 10 minutes and one of the colon (colonoscopy) 20-40 minutes.

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Do I need to bring anything with me?

You don't need to bring anything specific with you (no change of clothing etc). You might like to bring the instructions sent to you with your appointment details and something to read whilst you wait.



Do I need to fast beforehand?

The instructions sent to you with your appointment details explain what you will need to do to prepare for the endoscopy.

What does the bowel preparation involve?

In order for your bowels to be examined you will need to take a bowel preparation. This is a drink that helps you to empty your bowels.



What should I do if I experience bloating, nausea or vomiting during my prep?

Take thirty minutes to one hour break from your preparation, then restart your preparation at the same pace as originally instructed. Drink plenty of other clear liquids. Do the best you can.

I started my preparation but have not had a bowel movement yet?

It is not uncommon for your first bowel movement to occur several hours after you begin your prep.



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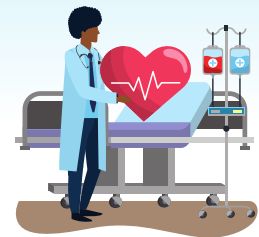


Do I have to have sedation?

For many of the procedures performed in our department you do not necessarily need to have sedation. For example, a gastroscopy can be performed with just a local anaesthetic spray. For some procedures such as ERCP we would advise that you do have sedation. You will have the opportunity to discuss your sedation with the team on the day of the procedure.

What kind of sedation can I have?

Most procedures in the endoscopy department are performed using 'moderate sedation'. The sedative we use most often is Midazolam which makes you feel sleepy and more comfortable but does not actually send you to sleep. Some people do not remember anything about the examination afterwards. These sedatives start to work very quickly but take hours to wear off (up to 24 hours). Occasionally some procedures require a deeper sedation or propofol.



Will I feel pain during the procedure?

Everyone's response to pain is different. Some people may feel some discomfort during the procedure, but you are constantly being monitored by the Endoscopist and nurses in the procedure room. If necessary, more sedative can be given. Other people are amazed to awake in the recovery room with little or no recollection of the procedure.

How long does it take?

The actual procedures take between 15 minutes and one hour, depending on the procedure. However, you should expect to be in the department between 3 - 4 hours.



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What does recovery involve?

If you have had no sedation, then recovery is very quick. You can walk through to the step-down area and wait a short while for a copy of the procedure report. If you have sedation, you will be moved to the recovery area, and you allowed time to sleep off the effects of the sedation. When you are awake you will be offered tea and toast before walking to the step-down area where you wait for a copy of the procedure report.

Can I drive after my procedure if I have had sedation?

No, you must have someone with you that is able to drive you home because of the deep sedation you received during your procedure. You may not drive the rest of the day.



Do I need to bring someone with me?

Whether you need to bring someone with you as an escort depends on whether you will have a sedative for the endoscopy. If you have a sedative, it is important that you have someone to help you home afterwards, including being driven home and staying with you overnight. For some examinations, you can opt not to have a sedative and, therefore, do not need to bring an escort with you.

When can I get the test results?

Either your GP will be written to with the results, or you will be given a copy. A report will be sent to your GP. You will also get a copy on the day of your procedure.

