

GASTROSCOPY

WHAT IS GASTROSCOPY?

Also known as “Upper Gastrointestinal Endoscopy”, gastroscopy involves the use of flexible tube to examine the upper gastrointestinal tract. This includes the oesophagus, stomach and duodenum. The procedure is commonly undertaken if your doctor suspects that you have an ulcer, inflammation or other abnormality. The endoscope allows full inspection of these areas and also allows biopsy samples to be taken if necessary.

HOW ARE YOU PREPARED?

You need to fast (nothing to eat or drink) for 6 hours before the procedure. While fasting, take all your regular medication with a small sip of water. If you are diabetic, you will be given special instructions.

WILL I BE GIVEN SEDATION?

Intravenous sedation is given by the anaesthetist. You will generally have no memory of the procedure.

WHAT DO WE DO?

At the beginning of the procedure your throat will be sprayed with a local anaesthetic and you will be given a sedative by injection into a vein. The procedure will take approximately fifteen minutes and you will be sleepy for some time afterwards.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

You should advise us if you are sensitive (allergic) to any drug or other substance, or if you may be pregnant.

You should inform us if you are taking blood thinning medication, have heart valve disease or have a pacemaker. You will be given special instructions if you are diabetic. **DO NOT** take diabetes tablets or insulin the evening before or the morning of the procedure unless instructed to do so. All other regular medications should be continued.

SAFETY AND RISKS

Gastroscopy is usually safe and simple.

Very rarely, there may be damage to the oesophagus at the time of the examination. Perforation rates are approximately 1 in 2000.

Rare side effects can occur with any procedure. Death is a remote possibility.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER GASTROSCOPY?

The sedation may affect your memory for some time afterwards and you may find that you are unable to recall details of any discussion of the procedure.

Because of the sedation given, you **MUST NOT** drive a car, operate machinery or make important legal decisions until the following day.

You should contact your doctor or local hospital if you have concerns.

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