

Having an Endoscopic Ultrasound

Information and advice for patients

Endoscopy

What is an endoscopic ultrasound?

An endoscopic ultrasound is an examination of your chest, gullet (oesophagus), stomach and surrounding organs including the pancreas, lymph nodes or major blood vessels. It involves an endoscope (a thin, flexible tube with a bright light on the end) and equipment that produces ultrasound images being passed through your mouth and into your gullet and stomach.

What are the benefits of an endoscopic ultrasound?

The benefit of an endoscopic ultrasound is that it can help your doctor diagnose the cause of your problems. This type of examination is more detailed than others as it allows the deeper structures to be seen rather than just the surface lining. Biopsies (tissue samples) can also be taken during this procedure if needed.

What are the risks of the procedure?

The risks of the procedure include:

- You will experience bloating, abdominal (tummy) discomfort and a sore throat for a few hours afterwards, which is normal.
- There is a slight risk of damage to your teeth, crowns or bridgework so please tell the nurse if you have crowns or have had any bridgework.
- There is a risk of making a small hole or tear (perforation) in the oesophagus. This happens in about 1 in 5,000 patients and may require an operation to repair the damage.
- A rare complication is a reaction to the sedative or numbing throat spray. Sedation can also alter your breathing rate, heart rate and blood pressure so you will be monitored for any changes during the procedure.
- There is a small risk of causing bleeding (1 in 10,000 cases), which may be serious enough for you to be admitted to hospital and need treatment with a blood transfusion.

What are the alternatives to this procedure?

This is the only test that will give your doctor the information they need. Occasionally other forms of imaging such as a CT or MRI scan may provide some of the information.

What are the risks of not having the procedure?

If you do not have the test, we may not be able to detect an abnormality that could need further treatment.

What do I need to do before I attend for an endoscopic ultrasound?

If you need the help of an interpreter to understand any of this information, or on the day of the procedure, please contact us as soon as possible.

Having an Endoscopic Ultrasound

Information and advice for patients

Endoscopy

If you are unable to attend your appointment for any reason, please let us know as soon as possible so that your appointment can be offered to somebody else. If you fail to attend without notifying us then you may not be offered another appointment.

If your symptoms have improved the test will still need to be performed as we need to check for any abnormality in your stomach.

0121 507 5318 (City and Birmingham Treatment Centre patients)

0121 507 3467 or 0121 507 3460 (Sandwell patients)

Please do not bring any valuables or jewellery to the hospital, or wear nail varnish or lipstick.

Preparing your stomach

To allow a clear view during your endoscopic ultrasound your stomach must be empty. Do not have anything to eat or drink for at least 4 hours before the test. You can take your regular medication with a small sip of water only.

Medication

If you take diabetic tablets or insulin, warfarin or clopidogrel/plavix please contact the unit as your appointment may need to be altered and you may need additional information.

0121 507 5318 (City and Birmingham Treatment Centre patients)

0121 507 3467 or 0121 5073460 (Sandwell patients)

Please bring any medication you are currently taking (including sprays and inhalers) with you to your appointment, and details of any allergies or reactions to medicines in the past.

What happens when I arrive at the hospital?

When you arrive please report to the reception desk at the endoscopy unit where a receptionist will check your details and direct you to the waiting area.

To respect the privacy of other patients, we do not usually allow friends or relatives to stay with you whilst you are attending for the test.

A nurse will then explain the procedure to you, to make sure you understand the benefits and possible risks as detailed in this leaflet. We want you to be as relaxed as possible for the test and welcome any questions you have. The nurse will also check your pulse and blood pressure.

You will also see the doctor who will perform the test and they will ask you to sign a consent form. The form also asks for consent for further procedures that may be necessary.

You will need to remove dentures, glasses, contact lenses and any jewellery or metal objects before the procedure.

Having an Endoscopic Ultrasound

Information and advice for patients

Endoscopy

What happens during the test?

The endoscopic ultrasound will take place in a private room with only you, the endoscopist and nurses present. In the examination room you will be made comfortable on the couch and will be asked to lie on your left side. The test usually takes about 20 – 40 minutes.

Sedation

An endoscopic ultrasound can be carried out using a numbing throat spray and/or sedation. If you decide to have the throat spray, it will be applied to the back of your throat to numb it and enable you to swallow the endoscope. It has a bitter taste and may feel hot on the back of the throat when you are asked to swallow it down.

If you decide to have sedation this will be given through a small tube in the back of your hand or in your arm (through a cannula). The sedation will make you sleepy and although you will be awake, you may not remember the procedure taking place afterwards. You will also be given oxygen through small tubes placed gently in your nostrils. A clip will be attached to a finger or ear lobe so that the levels of oxygen in your blood can be monitored. Your blood pressure may also be measured during the procedure using a cuff around your arm.

The procedure

To keep your mouth slightly apart, a plastic mouthpiece will be put gently between your teeth.

The endoscope will then be passed through your mouth and stomach and into your duodenum (the first part of your small intestine). This won't interfere with your breathing and will not cause any pain, but may be uncomfortable. If you get a lot of saliva in your mouth, the nurse will clear it using a suction tube, like the one used at the dentist.

During the procedure, samples may be taken and sent for testing.

What happens after the test?

After the procedure, you will need to stay in the unit to rest for about 1 hour.

Going home

If you have had sedation it is essential that a responsible adult comes to pick you up from the unit and accompanies you home by car or taxi. Public transport is not suitable. Please ask this person to phone the Endoscopy Unit 2 – 3 hours after your appointment to check if you are ready.

When you arrive home it is important to rest quietly for the remainder of the day with someone to look after you overnight. It is advisable to have the following day off work.

Having an Endoscopic Ultrasound

Information and advice for patients

Endoscopy

Sedation can impair your reflexes and judgement. For the first 24 hours following sedation do not:

- Drive a car
- Drink alcohol
- Take sleeping tablets
- Operate any machinery or electrical items; even a kettle
- Work at heights (including climbing ladders or onto chairs)
- Sign any legally binding documents

When will I know the results?

The test results will be explained to you before you are discharged from the unit.

You will also be given a written report of your procedure and a copy of the results will be sent to your GP. If you need one, you will be given a clinic appointment.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns please contact us.

City Hospital and Birmingham Treatment Centre patients

0121 507 5318

Monday - Friday, 7.30am - 6.30pm

Sandwell Hospital patients

0121 507 3467 or 0121 507 3460

Monday - Friday, 9am – 4.30pm

If you are unable to keep your appointment please telephone one of the above numbers as soon as possible so the appointment can be allocated to another patient.

Further information

For more information about our hospitals and services please see our websites www.swbh.nhs.uk and www.swbhengage.com, follow us on Twitter @SWBHnhs and like us on Facebook www.facebook.com/SWBHnhs.

Having an Endoscopic Ultrasound

Information and advice for patients

Endoscopy

Sources used for the information in this leaflet

- British Society of Gastroenterology, 'Guidelines on safety and sedation during endoscopic procedures', 2003
- British Society of Gastroenterology, 'Guidelines on Complications of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy', 2006

If you would like to suggest any amendments or improvements to this leaflet please contact the communications department on 0121 507 5420 or email: swb-tr.swbh-gm-patient-information@nhs.net



A Teaching Trust of The University of Birmingham
Incorporating City, Sandwell and Rowley Regis Hospitals
© Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust

ML4160
Issue Date: June 2013
Review Date: June 2015