

Endoscopy

Patency capsule test

What is a patency capsule test?

You have been referred for a small bowel capsule endoscopy. This is a test that allows the inside of your small bowel (intestine) to be examined.

We have to check if this capsule can pass safely through your intestine by testing a 'practice' or dummy capsule of a similar size. The 'dummy' capsule is made of dissolvable material and has a tiny Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tag inside that can be detected by an X-ray.

On the following day, you need to return to hospital for an abdominal X-ray no later than 30 hours after swallowing the capsule. This is to test whether the capsule is still in your body.

If the capsule is not detected by the X-ray, this confirms that your gastrointestinal (GI) tract is passable or 'patent' for an object the size of the real capsule. The real capsule test can then go ahead.

If the capsule is still inside your body after 30 hours, it will dissolve into small pieces that can pass naturally through your intestine. However, it means that the real capsule, which is not dissolvable, may not be able to pass through your small intestine and your doctor will decide the way forward.

Will it hurt?

The procedure is not painful. The capsule is a similar size to a large vitamin pill (28mm by 12 mm) and is swallowed easily by most patients.



Patient Information

What to do now you have your appointment

Phone us on 024 7696 7361 or 024 7696 6755 if you cannot make your appointment.

Let us know if you are pregnant as the capsule endoscopy should not be performed during pregnancy.

Let us know if you:

- have any problems swallowing
- have previously had surgery in your tummy area (abdominal surgery) or radiation treatments
- have a heart pacemaker in place

As this is a teaching hospital, a trainee may observe or help with your procedure. Please let us know at your appointment if you do not wish to have trainees present.

Preparation for your test

7 days before your appointment

- Make a note of how often you poo using the **Bowel Movement Activity Form on the last page of this leaflet**. Please bring the completed form when you attend your appointment.

1 day before your appointment

- Nothing to eat after 1pm. You can drink.
- Nothing to drink after 10pm.

On the day of your appointment

- Do not eat or drink anything, except for necessary medication with a sip of water.
- Bring in any medications you are taking (including inhalers), or a list of their names.
- Do not arrive too early for your appointment.
- Do not bring any valuables or large amounts of cash with you.

Patient Information

During your appointment

Once you have booked into the Unit at the reception desk, you will be met by a nurse specialist who will give you a brief medical assessment. This is to check your medical condition and find out about any past medical history.

The nurse specialist will explain the procedure to you, and you can ask any questions that you may have. You will be asked to sign a consent form, giving your permission to go ahead with the procedure. This is to make sure that you understand the risks and benefits of the procedure.

The nurse specialist will then give you the patency capsule to swallow with a small amount of water. They will explain the abdominal X-ray appointment and give you information for when you leave hospital. A contact number will be given to you before you leave the hospital.

You need to return to the hospital the next day to have an abdominal X-ray (about 30 hours after swallowing the patency capsule).

Discharge advice

- After 2 hours you can drink fluids; and necessary medications can be taken with sips of water.
- After 4 hours you can have a light snack.
- After 8 hours you can eat as normal again.
- Avoid strong electromagnetic fields, such as MRI scans or ham radios after swallowing the capsule until you pass it in your poo.
- Go to the Radiology department on the next day to your abdominal X-ray.

If you have any tummy (abdominal) pain, you feel sick or are being sick (nausea or vomiting) during the patency test, please contact your nurse specialist.

If this happens during 'out of hours' time, please go to the Emergency Department.

Patient Information

Results

A doctor will review the X-ray result. The nurse specialist will then contact you to talk about your results. If the patency test is successful, they will book the small bowel capsule endoscopy for you.

Risks

If the capsule stays in your body (is retained) for more than 30 hours, it will then dissolve into small pieces that can pass naturally through your intestine. However, if you have a narrowing of your small bowel, the capsule can get stuck at that point and lead to bowel obstruction. Sometimes it may require endoscopic or even surgical procedures to resolve this issue.

If you require any further information or clarification, please contact Beibei Liu, Clinical Nurse Specialist Capsule Endoscopy Service, on 024 7696 7361.

This leaflet was written by Beibei Liu and Professor Chuka Nwokolo.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact Beibei Liu on 024 7696 7361 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

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Document History

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Bowel Movement Activity Form

Please **start this form 1 week before** your patency capsule test

	Date	Time
Day 1		
Day 2		
Day 3		
Day 4		
Day 5		
Day 6		
Day 7		