

Patient Information

Endoscopy Unit

Therapeutic Oesophago-Gastro Duodenoscopy (OGD) for Oesophageal Varices

This booklet is to help you make an informed decision about agreeing to the procedure and to help answer any questions that you may have. It explains the diet you need to follow before your appointment.

What is an oesophago-gastro duodenoscopy?

An oesophago-gastro-duodenoscopy (OGD) is a way to closely look at your oesophagus, stomach and the first part of your small bowel. This is also known as the upper gastrointestinal (GI) tract. This allows us to take tissue samples called biopsies if needed. Biopsies are sent to the pathology department to be examined.

A gastroscopy is a procedure in which a thin flexible tube with a camera examines the inside of your upper GI tract on a screen. This lets the endoscopist check whether there is a disease or inflammation present. If a sample needs to be taken, you should not be able to feel it. Photographs are taken during the procedure and are kept in your medical records. If you choose to watch the procedure, please keep in mind that the images on the screen will make things look bigger than they really are.

Why do you need treatment?

You have oesophageal varices which need treating. Varices are like varicose veins that are found in your oesophagus. They have formed because the blood flow through your liver has weakened. If these veins bleed it is a medical emergency and you will need to be admitted to



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hospital. We like to treat varices as soon as we find them to reduce the risk of them bleeding.

Please contact your GP immediately if your condition or symptoms gets worse before your appointment.

What are your options?

Oral medication (beta-blockers) can be prescribed by your doctor and sometimes an invasive liver procedure called a transjugular intra-hepatic porto-systemic shunt (TIPS) is the only alternative. Endoscopic treatment is the standard treatment for patients who have already experienced bleeding.

Your doctor will discuss all the options to you and explain why endoscopic treatment is the right choice for you.

Risks

An OGD is an invasive procedure, which can lead to complications. Serious complications are extremely rare. The most serious risk is the gastroscopist damaging your upper GI tract during the test. This can cause an infection, bleeding or a tear (perforation). If this were to happen, your chest or abdominal may become painful and bloated and you may need medicine to treat the problem.

Other risks include sore throat, discomfort swallowing, dental damage, bleeding, heartburn/ reflux and reaction to medication.

Sometimes your procedure may have to be stopped or may be incomplete. This can happen if you find the procedure too uncomfortable or if your stomach contains a significant amount of food. In this case, the test may need to be repeated or we may suggest a different procedure.

Medication

Please continue to take your regular medication as prescribed, unless you are taking any of the following:

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- **Anticoagulants** – Please contact the Endoscopy unit on 024 7696 6805 if you are taking blood thinning medications such as **Warfarin, Clopidogrel, Rivaroxaban, Apixaban, Edoxaban, Dabigatran, Prasugrel or Aspirin**
- **Diabetes** – if your diabetes is controlled with **insulin** or **oral medication**, please make sure you have received a diabetic information leaflet and that the Endoscopy Unit is aware. This is to make sure you are seen in a timely manner.

Preparing for the procedure

We need to have a clear view of your upper GI tract.

If you have a morning appointment (before 12 noon) please follow these instructions:

- Do not eat after **midnight**
- You may have a drink at **6am**

If you have an afternoon appointment (after 12 noon) please follow these instructions:

- You may have a light breakfast no later than **8am**
- You may have small sips of water until **2 hours** before your appointment

How long will you be in the Endoscopy Unit?

This depends on how busy the Endoscopy Unit is. You should expect to be in the unit for around 3-4 hours. The Endoscopy unit also supports emergency patients and these can take priority over planned appointments.

The duration of stay also depends on how quickly you recover from the procedure and the effects of sedative medication.

Please note that we do not allow children in the Endoscopy Unit. Please make childcare arrangements or ask for your appointment to be rebooked.

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What happens when you arrive?

You will be checked in at reception. The receptionist will check your name, date of birth, address and confirm your arrangements for getting home. We will give you a patient wristband. This helps staff safely identify you during your stay in the Endoscopy Unit.

A member of staff will then take you to an admission room where you will be asked to change into a hospital gown. They will go through a brief medical assessment to make sure that you are fit enough to have the procedure. If you have diabetes, your blood glucose level will also be recorded. If you take anticoagulant medication, a finger prick test (INR) will also be carried out.

The nurse will make sure that you understand the procedure and will answer any questions or concerns you may have. You will then be asked to sign a consent form.

Your consent

A consent form is a legal document. Please read it carefully.

The doctor or nurse completing the form will explain the procedure to you, outlining the benefits and risks associated with the planned procedure.

You may ask questions about the procedure or ask them to repeat or explain further if you do not understand. You can decide not to go ahead at any time if you are not happy.

When you have read and understood all the information, including the possibility of complications, and you agree to undergo the investigation, please sign and date the consent form.

You will then wait in your admission room or be transferred to a waiting area, until it is your turn.

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Is the procedure painful?

You may feel some discomfort during the procedure. We offer the option of local anaesthetic throat spray or sedation. However, for treatment of varices, we suggest **both** throat spray **and** sedation.

Throat Spray

The back of your throat is numbed using local anaesthetic spray. After the spray, you will feel a lump in the back of your throat and feel as though you are unable to swallow. This is completely normal and you are very safe. The effects last for about an hour after the initial spray. After this, you can start eating and drinking as before.

Sedation

If you choose to have sedation, the nurse will insert a small plastic tube (cannula) into the back of your hand or arm. We will use this to give you the injection medication(s). A member of the team will give you more medication during the procedure if it is needed.

After the procedure, you are not allowed to drive or use public transport alone. You will need to arrange a family member or friend to collect you. You should not drink alcohol, operate heavy machinery or sign legal documents for 24 hours after your procedure.

The OGD Procedure

You will be taken to the procedure room. The medical staff will introduce to themselves. They will go through safety checks and answer any final questions.

You will be asked to remove any dentures to make sure they are not damaged. A blood pressure cuff and blood oxygen monitor are placed on your arm and finger to monitor you throughout.

At the start of the procedure, a plastic mouth guard will be inserted and oxygen will be administered through a sponge in your nostril. If you agreed for a sedation, it will then be administered.

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The endoscopist will insert the gastroscope (a tube with a camera) into your mouth and move it to the back of your throat. You may be asked to swallow to help move the gastroscope into your oesophagus. You will be asked to take a few deep breathes during this process as it is very common to feel uncomfortable. You may feel some light pressure or sensation like 'butterflies' in your stomach during the procedure. This is due to the tube camera's movement in different parts of the stomach.

It is normal for saliva to collect in your mouth, this will be removed by a small suction tube similar to one used at the dentist.

Air will be introduced to inflate the stomach, this can result in bloating and burping. This is perfectly normal and you should not feel embarrassed.

Treatment during the procedure

We use 2 types of treatment. The type used will be chosen by the endoscopist during the procedure.

Injection of Varices

Whilst the gastroscope is in your oesophagus a small injection needle will be inserted via the gastroscope. Medication will then be injected into the varices causing the blood within to clot and which will in turn cause them to shrink. Each varix may be injected more than once, this will be for the endoscopist to decide.

Banding of Varices

If banding is selected by the endoscopist, the gastroscope will be removed and further equipment applied before re-inserting. A hollow tube is placed over the end of the gastroscope, which allows small elastic bands to be placed around the varix. This will compress the varix causing it to shrink. When the endoscopist has identified the varices, they will then apply suction and place the band. You may receive more than one band if deemed necessary.

After both of these treatments, you may cough up a small amount of blood. This is normal and please do not worry.

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After the procedure

You will be transferred to the recovery area where you will be monitored by a nurse. You should expect to stay in the Endoscopy unit up to one hour or until a safe discharge time is planned. If you are diabetic, your blood glucose will also be checked.

Once you have recovered sufficiently, you will be moved into a chair and asked to get dressed. Your family member or friend will be contacted to arrange collection. Before you leave, the nurse or endoscopist may discuss the findings of the procedure with you. They will give you a discharge leaflet and a copy of your endoscopy report. They will also inform you of any further investigations or treatment you may need.

If you normally suffer from memory problems, a family member or friend can be with you while you are being discharged.

You will be given specific information regarding eating and drinking before your discharge. These instructions have been agreed by the endoscopist. Please follow them carefully to prevent complications when you get home.

General information

- We aim for you to be seen and treated as soon as possible. However, emergency patients take priority. We apologise if this delays your appointment. We will keep you updated while you wait.
- You may want to bring a dressing gown and slippers with you.
- The hospital cannot accept responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property during your time on the premises.
- Please contact your GP immediately if you have persistent abdominal pain or bleeding. Please tell them that you have an appointment with us.
- If you are unable to speak to your GP and your symptoms persist, you must attend Accident and Emergency (A&E) immediately.
- If you require hospital transport for your appointment, please contact the hospital transport service on 01926 310312.

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Further Information

If you need any more information or explanation, please contact the Endoscopy Unit on 024 7696 6805.

This booklet is based on information produced by the British Society of Gastroenterologists and has been adapted for UHCW NHS Trust by Sakina Lyall, Endoscopy Nurse and Joe Colby Lead Nurse for Gastroenterology.

www.bsg.org.uk

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us on 024 7696 6805 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

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