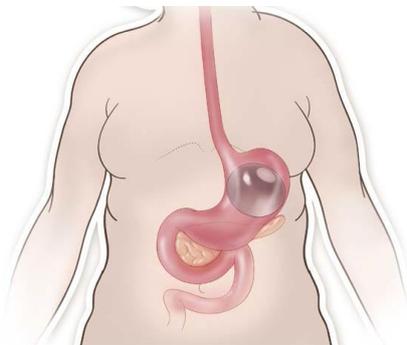


General Surgery and Specialist Weight Management Services

Information for patients having a gastric balloon insertion



What is a gastric balloon?

A gastric balloon is a soft silicone balloon that sits in the top of your stomach. It limits the amount of food you can eat by making you feel fuller more quickly after small meals. It can lead to weight loss when used alongside a healthy diet. The balloon used at UHCW can remain in your stomach for a maximum of 12 months.

What does the procedure involve?

The gastric balloon is placed into the stomach through the mouth and food pipe (oesophagus). You will be given some throat spray to numb the back of the throat and may be given sedation (light anaesthetic) drugs during the procedure. A thin flexible camera is passed into your stomach (endoscopy) to check the inside of your stomach is normal and it will allow for the placement of the gastric balloon. The camera is then removed and you will swallow the rolled up balloon at the end of a catheter or small tube. This is the same size as the camera and is no more difficult to swallow. The



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flexible camera is then reintroduced alongside and the balloon is inflated under direct vision with fluid (approximately 500mls) and a blue dye (50mls). The whole process takes about 30 minutes and you will be able to go home the same day.

How can I prepare for having a gastric balloon insertion?

You will be asked to attend a group information session at UHCW where you will be given information about the procedure and dietary information for after the procedure. You will be able to ask any questions you may have.

Medication

About 10 days prior to the procedure you will be started on a medication (Proton Pump Inhibitor) to reduce stomach acid , such as Omeprazole 40mg twice a day OR Lansoprazole 30mg twice a day.

Diabetes medication or blood thinning medication – please tell us if you are taking any of these medications as you will need to be given special instructions on taking these medications.

Diet

You will need to be on a liquid - only diet for 2 days prior to the procedure. The types of liquid you can consume include juices, thin soups, milk, slim fast/complan and thin liquid smooth yoghurts (no bits).

You should NOT eat or drink anything for 12 hours PRIOR to the procedure, to ensure the stomach is completely empty of food thus preventing any food entering the airways during insertion of the gastric balloon.

What happens on the day of the procedure?

You will attend the endoscopy department or ward where the surgeon and other members of the team will come and talk to you about the procedure and ask you to sign a consent form. The procedure will either take place in the endoscopy department or in the operating theatre.

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After the gastric balloon insertion you will remain in the department or ward for at least an hour until the initial effects of the sedation (light anaesthesia) have worn off. This will be as the sedation or anaesthetic drugs can make you feel sleepy and forgetful. The nurses will monitor you and ask you to start having small sips of water. It is important not to drink too quickly or gulp as you will be sick and might experience pain. Try sipping water from a teaspoon one spoon at a time.

You must have an adult to accompany you home and remain with you for at least 24 hours, as you may still be sleepy and forgetful from the sedative you have been given. You are advised that for 24 hours after the procedure you DO NOT drive, consume alcohol, operate machinery or sign important documents.

Discharge home

When you are ready to go home you will be given to take with you:

- *anti sickness medications
- *a card to keep with details of the balloon that was inserted
- *a leaflet giving post procedure dietary advice

Will I have a follow up appointment?

You will receive via post details of date/time of follow up.

- 7-10 days post procedure you will receive a telephone call from a Bariatric Nurse
- 5 weeks post procedure you will receive a telephone call from a Bariatric Nurse
- After 8 weeks you will be seen in clinic by a Bariatric Nurse
- After 12 weeks you will be seen in clinic by a Specialist Dietitian

Are there side effects with the gastric balloon?

There can be some side effects and it normally takes around three days for the worst of the symptoms to resolve, although it can sometimes take longer.

- Cramping, nausea and vomiting are very common in the first 7-10 days following gastric balloon insertion as the stomach is not used to having

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it in place. You will be given anti sickness medications to take at home. To help with nausea try to move around as this will help with the transit of food from the stomach to the gut. Follow the dietary instructions you are given in the dietary advice leaflet very carefully.

- Heart burn and acid reflux are common and you should continue to take the PPI medication eg. Omeprazole/or Lansoprazole which will reduce the production of acid in your stomach
- Constipation can occur especially in the initial stages as you are eating less than normal and also have less fibre in your diet. Ensure you drink plenty of fluids, increase fibre when possible and are active. If you experience discomfort you can take laxatives, although we would wish to know if this continues to be a problem
- Bad-smelling belching/burping can be a problem and may be from food getting stuck to the balloon. Try moving around as this helps reduce the likelihood of food getting stuck around the balloon and always chew your food well. Drinking clear fluids, having a small amount of a fizzy drink or sucking on ice cubes can help clear digesting food off the balloon.

Are there any risks or complications associated with having a gastric balloon?

Whilst most people do not experience any complications there are small risks associated with the insertion and after the gastric balloon insertion procedure.

- Bleeding during endoscopic gastric balloon insertion is very rare and affects less than 1 in 10,000 patients
- Chest infection may happen if fluid from the stomach refluxes backwards causing it to enter the lungs during gastric balloon insertion but this is extremely rare. This is the reason for patients to be fasted for the required amount of time prior to the procedure.
- Rupture of the balloon occurs in less than 1 in 200 patients. The blue dye inside the balloon acts as a “warning system”. If the balloon bursts, the dye is absorbed by the gut and changes your urine (for a short period) to a green colour. **This is a sign you must seek immediate medical attention by returning to uhcw hospital.**

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- Bowel obstruction or perforation occurs in less than 1 in 200 patients. If the gastric balloon deflates it may slip into the lower stomach or bowel and cause an obstruction. This would give symptoms of severe abdominal pain, vomiting and progressive bloating and you should seek immediate medical attention

Contact details

Bariatric Co-ordinator	Lisa Attenborrow	02476 966994
Specialist Dietitian		02476 966155
Specialist Nurses	Jenny Abraham	bleep 2660
	Laura Hollingsworth	bleep 4811
Out of hours	Surgical Assessment Unit	02476 961686

Or attend UHCW Accident and Emergency Department.

UHCW Hospital Switch board Tel. 02476 964000 to bleep the nurses

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this Information in another language or format please contact 0247 696 6168 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

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