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Having a patency capsule test as a trial run before a capsule endoscopy

Department of Endoscopy

Information for Patients

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What is a patency capsule test?

For a patency capsule test, you swallow a dissolvable capsule. It is coated with barium. Barium shows up on an X-ray. This test can be done as a trial run before you may have a capsule endoscopy procedure. In a capsule endoscopy you swallow a capsule with a tiny camera inside. This lets us see the inside of your digestive tract.

Why do I need a patency capsule test first?

A patency capsule test is used as a as a trial run. We do it if there is a risk that the real capsule might get stuck (retained). This might happen if there is a problem in your gastrointestinal tract (GI) tract, for example if you have Crohn's disease.

An X-ray is done as part of the test. It will show us if there is a risk that the real capsule will get stuck (retained) in your small intestine.

How is the test carried out?

You will need to visit the hospital 2 times.

- Day 1 you swallow the capsule.
- Day 2 you come back the next day to have an X-ray.

We will ask you to come back to the Radiology Department at Windsor Building Level 1. This is around 29 hours after swallowing the patency capsule. We will give you the time after you swallow your capsule. A doctor will see the X-ray to see if the capsule is still in the body or not. If the capsule is still in your body, it will start to dissolve on its own after 30 hours.

Diabetic patients

If you are diabetic, please call the department on **0116 258 6997**. We can advise you on how to manage your diabetes during this procedure.

What instructions do I need to follow?

It is important that all patients follow the instructions below:

The day before the test:

- Have lunch as normal before 2pm, **no more food after this**.
- Have clear fluids only after 2pm, until midnight. This includes water, squash, fizzy drinks, black tea or black coffee, boiled sweets.

The day of the test:

- Have no food or drink before the appointment. You can take any medicines you need up to 2 hours before the appointment. You can take them with sips of water.
- Please go to the Endoscopy Department for the time of your appointment. We aim to keep waiting times to a minimum, but it depends on how busy we are. Please expect to be with us for 1 to 2 hours. It may be longer during busy periods. We also do emergency procedures. These can take priority over our outpatient appointments.
- You will swallow the patency capsule with a small amount of water. You can then go home.
- You can have clear fluids 2 hours after swallowing the capsule.
- You can have a light snack 4 hours after swallowing the capsule.
- After 5pm you can eat and drink as normal.
- Do not lie down through the day. Please stay active with plenty of walks.

The day after swallowing the patency capsule:

- Please visit the Radiology Department at Windsor Building Level 1, to have an X-ray of your tummy (abdomen) **29 hours** after you have swallowed the capsule. The capsule starts to dissolve after 30 hours. You need to return by 29 hours to make sure you have the X-ray taken in time.
- It will show if the patency capsule has passed through your body. After this you can go home.
- We will call you in a few days once the X-ray has been looked at by a doctor and if it is safe to proceed with capsule endoscopy.

Getting to your appointment

For patients who meet eligible criteria, a patient transport service is available if you need transport to and from your appointment. This service is provided by EMED Patient Care. To make a booking contact the service on 0300 777 1800, or arrange this through your GP, at least 3 days before your appointment. Find out more about the EMED patient care by visiting: https://yourhealth.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk/library/corporate-nursing/patient-experience/3346-non-emergency-patient-transport-service-emed/file

When will I get the results?

We will contact you with the results of the test within a few days. If you have not heard from us within 5 days, please call the department on **0116 258 6997** (Monday to Sunday, 8.30am to 5.30pm).

What will the results mean?

If the patency test shows us that your GI tract lets an object the size of the real capsule pass through normally, then in the next 2 weeks you will go on to have your capsule endoscopy procedure. We will send you details of this soon.

If the patency test shows that the real capsule would have been stuck or “retained,” then you will not go on to have a capsule endoscopy. Your doctor will be in touch with you.

What do I need to look out for?

There is a small chance of the capsule getting stuck in your body. This can lead to:

- feeling sick (nausea)
- vomiting
- tummy (abdominal) pain.

Very rarely this can lead to a hole in the tissue (perforation) which could need surgery. Please call the endoscopy unit if you get these symptoms before the capsule has passed.

Contact details

- Endoscopy Department on **0116 258 6997** / **0116 258 6995** (Monday to Sunday, 8.30am to 5.30pm). Out of these hours contact Ward 42 at Leicester Royal Infirmary on 0116 258 6284.
- You can contact the NHS helpline on 111 for advice.

Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice
Visit www.uhleicester.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester’s Hospitals.
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact uhl-tr.informationforpatientsmailbox@nhs.net

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If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead
or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email uhl-tr.equalitymailbox@nhs.net

We are a research hospital and you may be asked to take part in research

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