
Department of Gastroenterology

Video capsule endoscopy

Information about the test

What is video capsule endoscopy?

Video capsule endoscopy is a test for examining the small intestine. It involves swallowing a pill or capsule that contains a camera and transmits images to a recording device that is worn on your belt. It is also known as the 'camera pill'. It provides an eight hour video film of the inside of the intestines that helps to identify medical problems. Visualising this part of the body is very difficult as it cannot be reached by standard flexible viewing telescopes – or 'endoscopes' - that can be used for looking at the upper and lower intestines.

Why do I need a video capsule endoscopy?

Your doctor will have requested this test because of a suspicion of a problem affecting the small intestine. A common reason for this is if you have experienced blood loss from the gut, and the cause has not been found on examination of the large bowel (or 'colon') or the stomach using other tests. The video capsule test is by far the best and easiest way of looking at the small intestine.

How is the test carried out?

- You will be asked to come along to the department of gastroenterology (level E7) for 0800 hours on the morning of your test. Please wait in the seating area outside until you are called in.
- It is very important that you have an empty stomach – you must not have anything to eat or drink for six hours beforehand (this includes medications).
- It is a good idea to wear loose fitting clothes that provide access to the abdomen – for instance, women should wear a top and trousers or skirt rather than a dress.
- You will be asked to sign a consent form, permitting the test to be performed.
- A number of stickers attached to wires will be attached to your abdomen, which act like an aerial to pick up the radio signal from the capsule.
- The wires from the aerial will be connected to a recorder box on a special belt (with braces) that you will wear. A battery will also be carried on this belt to power the recorder box. The boxes are not particularly heavy but can feel so by the end of the day.

- You will then swallow the capsule itself with a glass of water. The capsule is no bigger than some medication capsules and is not difficult to swallow.
- You must not then have anything to drink until at least two hours after swallowing the camera pill.
- After two hours, you may take clear fluids (with your regular medications if necessary).
- After four hours, you may take a light lunch.
- During the day, you are free to use the department as a base, but you may leave the hospital or go to work if you wish. The test does not set off anti-theft sensors in shops, but it is preferable not to be close to wireless networked computer apparatus.
- Please return to the department at 1700 on the day of the test for us to remove the recording apparatus.

Can anything go wrong?

You should not have this test if you have an artificial heart pacemaker. The capsule could interfere with the pacemaker, but in practice the pacemaker actually disturbs the capsule recording instead.

The only cause for concern is if you should experience a 'retained capsule'. This is where the capsule has not passed through the intestine for some reason (normally a narrowed area or kink in the bowel). Please read the attached additional information on a 'retained capsule'.

Does anything interfere with the recording?

Mobile telephones, shop anti-theft devices and television remote controls do not interfere with the radio signal from the capsule. It is advisable not to be near wireless computer networks as these can potentially cause interference.

What happens to the capsule?

The capsule is designed to be disposable. We do not want it returned to us!

How do I find out the results?

The computer needs to download the images from the recorder box overnight. Over 50,000 pictures need to be looked at, and this can take some time, especially as an abnormality may be present on only one or two images. You should hear by telephone after approximately one week if there is any need for us to check for a retained capsule (please see below), and you should receive official notification of the results at the same

time as your general practitioner after one to two weeks. If you have not heard the results after this time, please telephone the department on 01223 596231.

Where can I find more information about the test?

If you have any further questions or concerns, then you should contact:

Dr Jeremy Woodward, consultant gastroenterologist at Addenbrooke's Hospital

- Box 133
- Telephone number: 01223-596231.

The following website may also provide some further information:

www.givenimaging.com

Please ask if you require this information in other languages, large print or audio format: 01223 216032 or patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Potete chiedere di ottenere queste informazioni in altre lingue, in stampato grande o in audiocassetta.

Italian

若你需要本信息的繁體中文、大字體或音訊格式的版本，請要求索取。

Cantonese

तमने आ माहिती वीछ भाषाओमां, मोटा अक्षरोमां अथवा सांभली शकाय जेवा माध्यम (ओडीओ इमेज)मां जेठती छोय तो कृपा करीने पूछो.

Gujarati

تکایه پرسیار بکه نه گهر نه وزانیاریهت دهوی به زمانیکی تر , به بیستی گهوره یانیش به شیوهی دهنگ

Kurdish

آگر آپ کو یہ معلومات دوسری زبانوں میں، بڑے الفاظ کی اشاعت میں یا آڈیو ٹیپ پر درکار ہوں تو براۓ مہربانی اس کیلئے درخواست کریں۔

Urdu



Addenbrooke's is smoke-free. Please do not smoke anywhere on the site.

For advice on quitting, contact your GP or the NHS smoking helpline free, 0800 169 0 169

Document history

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