



Wireless capsule endoscopy investigation

You have been advised to have an investigation of your small bowel using wireless capsule endoscopy. This leaflet explains what this is, how to prepare for it and what will happen before, during, and after the procedure. If you have any questions or have concerns about any part of the proposed test, please contact the capsule nurse specialist on 0118 322 8342.

Date of investigation: _____

Time: 8:00am

Please go to the Royal Berkshire Hospital Endoscopy Unit (entrance on Craven Road). Once you have the capsule (see below), you can leave the unit but will need to return between 4pm and 5pm the same day to remove equipment you were given in the morning.

What is a wireless capsule endoscopy?

Wireless capsule endoscopy is a test that looks for abnormalities in the small bowel.

The small bowel (intestine) is the part of the digestive system between the stomach and large bowel (colon). The bowel is narrow but between 3-5 metres long.

The capsule is the size of a large vitamin pill (26 x 11mm). It contains a tiny video camera with a chip, and is powered by two tiny batteries and a wireless transmitter. The examination aims to obtain images to diagnose possible problems of the small bowel and to find the possible cause for your symptoms.



The capsule (MEDTRONIC PILLCAM SB3) is the size of a large vitamin pill.

What you need to do before your investigation

- **Please stop** any iron tablets (e.g. ferrous sulphate) for 7 days before the procedure.
- You can take most other medication (see separate section on diabetes medication) but with small sips of water.
- Please avoid painkillers containing codeine or opiates, e.g. cocodamol, dihydrocodeine, for one week before the test. If you feel that you are unable to stop this, please contact the capsule nurse specialist to discuss further.
- **The day before, have a normal breakfast before 9am. Following breakfast, please do not eat anything solid after this.**

- You can have water, clear soup, fruit juice (without pulp) soft drinks, black tea or coffee (no milk). These drinks can be taken at any time you choose.
- At about 5pm the day before, make up the Moviprep / Plenvu and mix with 1 litre of water. You can add cordial if required, but not blackcurrant. Moviprep / Plenvu has a laxative effect and will make you go to the toilet urgently and more often than normal.
- It is important to drink an extra 500mL to 1 litre of clear fluids after taking Moviprep / Plenvu.
- You must then stop drinking fluids from 12 midnight before the test, until the start of the test.
- You can resume taking any regular medication after 10am on the day of the test.
- If you follow these instructions, your bowel (small intestine) will be clear, and this will help you to have a successful investigation and avoid having to repeat the procedure.
- Please wear loose, comfortable clothing. A skirt or trousers is preferable to a dress.
- If this appointment is not convenient, please call 0118 322 8391 as soon as possible. It is important that you let us know well in advance, so that we can offer the appointment to someone else.

Patients with diabetes

See the leaflet called '[Advice for people with diabetes undergoing a gastroscopy and/or colonoscopy](#)'.

Ambulance transport

If you require ambulance transport, please contact your GP to book this. It is important to do this at least 48 hours before your procedure.

On arrival to the unit

On your arrival, the specialist nurse will check you are well enough to go ahead with the procedure and will explain the capsule procedure to you in detail, including any risks. Risks and complications include:

- Capsule retention (not passing the capsule afterwards).
- Aspiration (accidental breathing in of stomach fluids).
- Tummy pain.
- Vomiting (being sick).
- Inadequate video images (the capsule doesn't capture what is causing your symptoms).

You will have the opportunity to ask questions, and we will also ask you to sign a consent form to say you understand what the procedure involves and are happy for it to go ahead.

The procedure

Once you have signed the consent form, a sensor will be attached to your tummy and connected to a data recorder that is worn at the waist on a large belt.

After swallowing the capsule

- Do not eat or drink for 2 hours.
- 2 hours after taking the capsule: you may have clear fluids (e.g. water, clear soup, non-pulpy fruit juice, black tea or coffee)
- 4 hours after taking the capsule: you may have a light meal (e.g. scrambled egg on toast, a sandwich)
- 6 hours after taking the capsule: you may have clear fluids (e.g. water, clear soup, non-pulpy fruit juice, black tea or coffee)
- 8 hours after taking the capsule: come back to the Endoscopy Unit to have the belt and bag removed. You may start eating normally again once the equipment is removed.

NOTE: You will be free to move around as normal and can leave the unit, returning 4pm-5pm. Once the procedure is over, your pictures will be downloaded and reviewed by the doctor.

Passing the capsule

The capsule is disposable and will be passed from your body naturally into the toilet. You do not normally feel any pain or discomfort when this happens. Most patients pass the capsule after a day or two; however, the time it takes to pass can vary from person to person. Do not worry if this takes some time. If 2 weeks after your procedure you still have not seen it, please contact your nutrition nurse as you might be asked to attend an X-ray to check whether it is still there.

PLEASE NOTE: Until it is confirmed that you have passed the capsule, you must not have an MRI scan. Having an MRI while the capsule is inside your body may result in serious damage to your gut.

If you develop any unexplained tummy pain, nausea or vomiting, please contact us. If this occurs out of normal hours, contact your GP or NHS 111.

Timeline of instructions for the procedure

7 days before procedure	• Stop iron tablets. For diabetes medication, please read the leaflet called 'Advice for people with diabetes undergoing a gastroscopy and/or colonoscopy'
Day before procedure	• Stop solid food after breakfast (9am) and only drink clear fluids. • At 5pm: Take Moviprep / Plenvu mixture and drink extra 500mL to 1 litre water or clear fluids. • At 12 midnight: Stop drinking all fluids.
Day of procedure	• Arrive at unit at 8am to take capsule and be fitted with recorder equipment. • After 2 hours: You may have clear fluids (and any regular medication). • After 4 hours: You may eat a light meal. • After 6 hours: You may have clear fluids. • Return to unit 4pm-5pm to return equipment. You can then eat and drink as normal.

1-3 days after procedure	• You should pass the capsule naturally in the toilet. You do not need to let the unit know when this happens. • If you haven't passed (or seen) the capsule after 2 weeks, please contact your nutrition nurse as you will need to return for an X-ray.
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Results of the investigation

Your investigation results will be sent to your referring doctor.

Contacting us

If you have any questions or need any advice, please do not hesitate to contact the capsule nurse specialist on tel: 0118 322 8342.

Endoscopy Booking Team tel: 0118 322 7459

Gastroenterology Admin Team tel: 0118 322 8391 or email rbb-tr.cat4@nhs.net

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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Next review due: October 2027