

Information for Parents/Carers on a Gastroscopy Procedure

This leaflet aims to provide information on why a gastroscopy is needed and it explains how the procedure is performed.

What is a gastroscopy?

It is the name of the procedure in which an endoscope (a flexible tube with a camera on the end) is passed via the mouth into the stomach and duodenum (the very start of the small bowel) allowing the Doctor to look at the upper part of the digestive system.

Why is this procedure needed?

The procedure helps the Doctor make a diagnosis as to why the child has been feeling unwell. The Doctor who will be carrying out the procedure will discuss and explain in detail what happens. Questions can be asked at this time.

What happens on the day of the procedure?

If you have been informed that the procedure is happening in the **morning** it is very important after midnight to only have water or squash to drink up until 6am on the day of the procedure. From 6am nothing more must be drunk until after the procedure.

If you have been informed that the procedure is happening in the **afternoon** you may have a light early breakfast before 7am and then only water or squash to drink up until 11am on the day of the procedure. From 11am nothing more must be drunk until after the procedure.

If the child is taking medication the doctor or nurse will discuss if there is a need to stop taking it on the day of the procedure.

The child will either be admitted to Buxton Ward, Children's Ward situated on level 2 west block or Lion Ward in the Day Procedure Unit (DPU) situated on level 2 central block. During the admission parents/carers will be able to stay. One of them will also be allowed to accompany the child to theatre and stay until they go to sleep.

The parents/carers will be asked to sign a consent form, following explanation of the procedure, this gives the doctor permission to carry out the procedure. The child will also be seen by an Anesthetist.

What happens during the procedure?

The procedure is carried out in theatre under a general anaesthetic, so the child will be fast asleep whilst it is done.

It will take about 20 minutes. A number of biopsies will be taken to give more information. This involves pinching out a tiny bit of lining from the stomach (approximately 2 – 3 millimetres about the size of a pin head) with an instrument called 'forceps'. The biopsies are then sent to the laboratory for analysis which will then help to make a diagnosis.

What happens following the procedure?

The child will return to the ward feeling a little sleepy. Once awake they will be encouraged to have a drink followed by something to eat.

The Doctor will tell you what they were able to see before the child goes home, however it will take a week or so before we can tell you the result of the biopsies.

A member of the children's gastroenterology team will contact you with the results and discuss the diagnosis and treatment plan, if one has not already been decided prior to discharge from hospital.

What complications might happen following the procedure?

For the first couple of days after a gastroscopy the child may experience a sore throat when swallowing, drink plenty of fluids and try sucking on ice-cubes and ice lollies to help reduce the soreness.

It is advisable to take regular pain relief for the first 24 hours; usually paracetamol is all that is required.

The child may feel tired, a little clumsy and unsteady for 24 hours; this is a side effect of the anaesthetic and will not last long. See the leaflet "*Your Child's General Anaesthetic Leaflet*" for further information on the side-effects following a general anaesthetic which will be available from the nurse. The day after an anaesthetic it is advisable to rest.

The potential risk of having significant complications from the procedure is small; however taking the biopsies carries a small risk of haemorrhage (bleeding) or perforation (a hole in the bowel wall). This occurs less than one for every 1,000 procedures and can usually be sorted out quickly.

If any symptoms carry on for any longer than 48 hours, or if there are any worries or concerns following the procedures, please contact a member of the children's gastroenterology team or if a member of the team is not available contact the children's assessment unit (CAU). Contact details below.

After the gastroscopy procedure the child may vomit small spots of blood from the stomach for up to 72 hours after the procedure. If the child starts to vomit large amounts of bright blood or clots please contact a member of the children's gastroenterology team or CAU.

How to contact us:

Members of the Children's Gastroenterology Team are normally available Monday – Friday between 09.00 – 17.00 hours on the following numbers:

Children's Gastroenterology Specialists Nurses: **01603 286320**

Paediatric Consultants – via Secretary: **01603 287174 or 01603 289936**

If you are unable to contact a member of the children's gastroenterology team, contact CAU on **01603 289774**. CAU are open 24 hours a day to give advice over the telephone or they are able to arrange for the child to be seen by a doctor.

