

Child health information factsheet

Gastroscopy

A gastroscopy is a procedure to look at the inside of your child's oesophagus (food pipe), stomach and duodenum (first part of the small intestine) with a long flexible camera (endoscope).

Your doctor feels that a gastroscopy will help diagnose your child's symptoms and decide on treatment if needed.

Before the examination

Your child will not be able to eat or drink for several hours before the procedure. Written instructions will be sent to you about this.

If your child is having a colonoscopy on the same day follow the instructions on the bowel preparation for colonoscopy leaflet.

In hospital

The paediatric gastroenterology team will look after your child while they are in hospital.

The procedure will be fully explained and you will be asked to sign a consent form. It is important to let the doctor or nurse know if your child has any known allergies or has had a reaction to any drugs or tests in the past.

The procedure

A gastroscopy for children is done in the operating theatre and your child will be given a general anaesthetic (medicine given to make them go to sleep).

An endoscope is passed into your child's mouth, down into the oesophagus, stomach and duodenum.

Biopsies (removal of small pieces of tissue) are taken during the procedure and examined to help with the diagnosis.

After the procedure

Your child will be taken to the recovery room. When they are ready, you can go with the nurse to collect him or her and go back to the ward. Your child will rest on their bed and can have a drink and something to eat.

The doctor or nurse will talk to you about what was seen at the gastroscopy.

Results from biopsies will not be available for a few weeks so you may be asked to come back to the clinic for these results.

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Some children may need to stay in hospital for more treatment. When your child is ready to go home you will be given further advice.

If you have any concerns at home you can contact the nurse specialists, the ward or your child's GP.

In an emergency go to your nearest emergency department.

Possible complications

A gastroscopy is a safe and effective way of investigating your child's symptoms, but every procedure has risks and potential complications.

Complications of an anaesthetic – Your anaesthetist will be able to talk with you about the risks of an anaesthetic

Complications of an endoscopy – Making a hole in the oesophagus, stomach or small intestine is very rare. The risk is 1 in 2000.

Bleeding from a biopsy site or from minor damage caused by the endoscope can happen, but usually stops on its own.

Let the doctor know if your child has any loose teeth. There is a risk of teeth being dislodged or damaged by the endoscope.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact

Mick Cullen or Claire Barnes, paediatric gastroenterology nurse specialists
Switchboard: **023 8077 7222** ext **3814** bleep **1392** or **2776**

If you need a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or on audio tape, please telephone 023 8079 4688 for help.