

## Patient information factsheet

# Frequently asked questions about the endoscopy unit

We've written this factsheet to answer some common questions about having an appointment in the endoscopy unit. We hope it helps to answer some of the questions you may have.

### How long should I allow for my appointment?

You should expect to be in the department for up to four hours.

### Why will my appointment take four hours?

The four hours includes your admission, nursing assessment, procedure and recovery time. Due to the nature of the service, there may be delays, but we aim to keep you updated where possible.

If we give you sedation (medicine to make you sleepy) during your procedure, the average recovery time is 45 minutes. If we don't give you sedation, you will be free to leave immediately after your procedure.

Please note that your appointment time is when you should arrive at the department, not when you will have your procedure.

If we have any inpatient emergencies, your appointment may be delayed.

### Can my relatives or friends wait with me?

We don't usually allow relatives or friends to come through to your appointment with you. Please let us know if you require additional support and we can make alternative arrangements for you.

Please be aware that we have limited space in the waiting room, so we may ask your relatives or friends to wait elsewhere in the hospital. We will provide them with a pager, so we can contact them when you are ready to be collected from the unit.

### How should I prepare for my procedure?

The instruction leaflet enclosed with your appointment letter will clearly explain what you will need to do to prepare for the procedure. If you are uncertain, please call us for advice.

### Do I need to bring anything with me?

Please bring the patient questionnaire with you. You should have received this as part of the paperwork we sent you. Please contact us if you have not received this.

If we have asked you to stay overnight, you will need to bring your nightwear, wash kit and any medication you usually take.

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## Do I need to bring someone with me?

If you choose to have sedation, you must arrange for a responsible adult to escort you home after the procedure. They will need to collect you from the endoscopy unit. You will also need someone to stay with you overnight if you've been sedated.

We do not recommend taking long journeys by public transport (bus, coach or train) immediately after your procedure.

## What if I have no one to collect me or stay with me overnight?

You must contact us as soon as possible before your appointment on **023 8120 4516** to discuss the options available.

## Will I be given sedation?

Sedation is available for all procedures, but the common practice is:

- Colonoscopy – sedation is recommended
- Gastroscopy – a local anaesthetic spray to numb the back of your throat is given and sedation is offered
- Flexible sigmoidoscopy – sedation is not routinely given
- Bronchoscopy/EBUS/EUS – sedation is recommended

## What does the sedation do?

The sedation will make you feel more comfortable and a little sleepy. It is not an anaesthetic and will not send you off to sleep. However, it can make you forgetful for about 24 hours after the procedure.

## How will I feel after the sedation?

You will feel very sleepy at first. Then you may feel wobbly and a bit drowsy. It is a similar experience to being drunk.

These feelings will wear off after a few hours. However, your reaction times and concentration levels may be affected for up to 24 hours. For this reason, you should not drive or operate any machinery for at least 24 hours after your procedure. Your motor insurance may be invalid if you drive within this period.

## What does the local anaesthetic throat spray involve? (For gastroscopy procedures only)

We will spray the back of your throat with a local anaesthetic spray to numb the area. This will make swallowing the scope a lot easier. However, you will still have the gag reflex. The area will feel numb for about 30 minutes.

If you choose to have the procedure with just throat spray, you will remain fully conscious throughout the procedure. You will be able to leave the department as soon as the procedure is finished.

To allow your throat to return to normal, you should not eat or drink for up to one hour.

## Contact us

If you have any other questions about your appointment or investigations, please feel free to contact the endoscopy department using the telephone number on your appointment letter.

## Useful links

[www.uhs.nhs.uk/OurServices/Gastroenterology/Endoscopy](http://www.uhs.nhs.uk/OurServices/Gastroenterology/Endoscopy)

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For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital, please visit **[www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalsupport](http://www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalsupport)**