

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Endoscopy department

Colon capsule exam

PillCam technology

The PillCam COLON capsule is an easy to swallow disposable pill with two cameras inside. It takes thousands of pictures as it travels along your gut and transmits the pictures wirelessly to a data recorder that you wear around your waist. This technology allows our hospital team to view the lining of your bowel without requiring sedation or a stay in hospital.



For the duration of the test, you will wear a data recorder as pictured which you can take home and return the following day, this records the pictures sent from the capsule as it travels through your gastrointestinal tract and is passed out in your normal bowel movement.



Preparing for your procedure:

- For the test to work effectively your colon needs to be emptied prior to your procedure.
- If you take an iron supplement, please inform the department as this will need to be stopped seven days prior to the test.
- For three to five days before your test, you will be asked to start a low residue diet to help clear the colon, you will be provided with this information.

The day before your procedure:

- Do not eat any solid food after midnight; for the whole day before your test, you need to follow a clear fluid diet including cordial (not blackcurrant), tea/ coffee without milk, strained soup/broth (no bits), and water. You may have boiled sweets and mints.
- At 5pm you will be asked to start taking a laxative solution, this is to clean your colon so the camera can capture clear images and ensure an accurate diagnosis from your doctor. You will be asked to collect this from the endoscopy department and full instructions will be given on how to take it for the best effect.

The day of your procedure:

- Take any prescribed medications two hours prior to the test.
- Drink water only from 6am.
- You may be instructed to take an additional prescribed medication an hour before your appointment time; this is to help the capsule movement.
- Attend the department for your test and bring any medications you have been prescribed for the test with you.

During the procedure:

- Once you have swallowed the capsule, it captures images as it travels naturally through your colon. You will need to take booster medications including laxatives and possibly a suppository to help the capsule move through the bowel before the battery runs out; this will be fully explained when you attend for your capsule test.
- It is best to remain active and walk around when possible, this encourages the natural movement through the bowel. Please avoid lying down or sleeping during the procedure.
- The images are transmitted to a data recorder that you wear in a pouch and strap around your shoulder, and a belt around your waist. After the procedure is complete, your health professionals will download the data and analyse the images.

After the procedure

If you don't notice the capsule pass into the toilet after two weeks, you may require an x-ray to check that the capsule has been passed successfully. We will keep in contact with you; it is rare for the capsule to be retained but an x-ray will confirm this, as sometimes you won't see the capsule pass.

Potential complications

Should you experience severe abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting or generally unwell please contact the department for advice or attend your nearest Emergency Department outside of normal working hours.

When will I get my results?

Following the procedure, the images of your colon will be transferred from the recorder to a computer. They will be organized into a video to be reviewed. Once reviewed, your doctor will contact you to discuss the results.

How long does the procedure take?

It can take up to 10 hours to complete the procedure. During this time, you are fully awake and can go about a normal day, you will be instructed when to eat and drink and what to expect. Please stay active throughout the day as this will help with capsule progression.

How big is the capsule - will I feel any pain or discomfort?

It is about the size of a vitamin pill and easy to swallow. It has a smooth texture similar to capsules swallowed for pain relief. You should not feel any pain or discomfort when swallowing it, or while it moves through your colon.

How long is the recovery?

Recovery is immediate because there is no sedation required. While the capsule transmits images, you will be able to continue with your normal routine and perform daily tasks such as driving. As you will be required to take further laxatives you may wish to remain close to toilet facilities.

Do I need to retrieve the capsule?

No. The capsule is disposable and passes through the body naturally during a bowel movement.

Can I take my regular medication?

Every patient is different, so it is important to speak to your healthcare professional about continuing your regular medications during the procedure. Diabetic medication needs to be discussed with your diabetic nurse or specialist.

The following QR link has generic videos showing the process for a colon capsule. As you will have been given specific instructions for your bowel preparation, please follow the instructions provided by the department.



Further information

Should you need further information or advice, please contact the Endoscopy department on 01623 622515, extension 4420 or 4076.

You can write down any questions for your healthcare professional in the space below.

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Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns, or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you. External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them. If you require a full list of references (if relevant) for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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