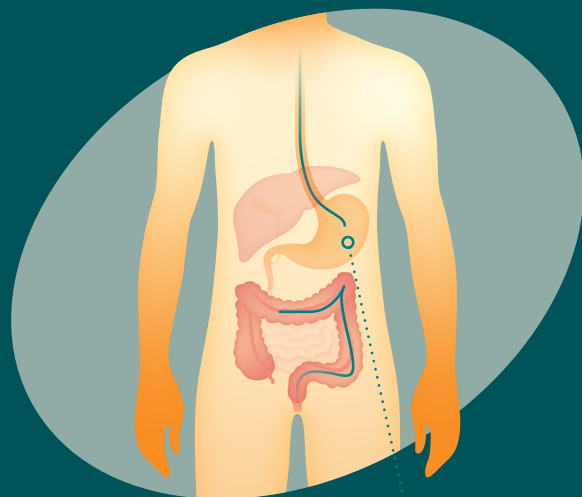


Gastroscopy

A gastroscopy uses a thin flexible tube to examine your oesophagus, stomach and duodenum. This is used to check the health of your gut when you have the following symptoms:

- 1 Upper abdominal pain.
- 2 Heartburn not responsive to medication.
- 3 Difficulty swallowing.
- 4 Vomiting, especially blood.
- 5 Persistent nausea and vomiting.
- 6 Black, tar like bowel motions.
- 7 Unexplained weight loss.

Typical pathologies found include oesophagitis, hiatal hernias, ulcers or digestive conditions such as coeliac disease.



GASTROSCOPY

Gastroscopy pre-op

1 Before the procedure

Fasting: Do not eat any food for at least 6 hours before your gastroscopy. Your stomach must be empty for the procedure to be safe and accurate. You may be allowed small sips of water up to 2 hours before your appointment, but check your specific instructions.

Medications: Most regular medications can be taken with a small sip of water. However, some medications may need to be stopped or adjusted (see medications).

Smoking and gum: Do not smoke or chew gum on the day of your procedure, as these can increase stomach secretions and affect your results.

2 The day of your Gastroscopy

- Arrive at the hospital or clinic 10 minutes before your scheduled time. Wear loose, comfortable clothing and leave valuables at home.
- Bring your referral if you have it, your list of medications, and any forms provided by your doctor.
- If you are having sedation, you must arrange for an adult to collect you after the procedure

What happens in a gastroscopy

- Most gastroscopies are performed at Southern Endoscopy Centre but occasionally at St Georges Hospital or Southern Cross Hospital. Gastroscopies are performed as a day-case procedure so you will need someone to drop you off and drive you home.
- Once admitted you will be taken to pre-op ward and may be asked to change into a gown. An IV will be placed in your arm so you can receive fluids and medication to help you relax and keep you comfortable during the procedure.
- When ready you will be transferred to the endoscopy suite where you'll be asked to lie on a bed so that the nurses can attach monitors. The procedure is performed with you lying on your left side. An anaesthetic mouth spray is given to stop any gag reflex. You will be asked to bite onto a mouth guard that will be tied into position. This ensures you don't inadvertently bit through the scope.
- Once the sedation takes effect the gastroscope is inserted though the mouth and advances as far as the duodenum. It is common to feel a gassy, bloated feeling in the abdomen. This is because of the gas used to distend the stomach for a better view. The whole procedure takes around 10min.
- Afterward, you'll spend some time in recovery while the sedation wears off. You will be given food and drink when the mouth spray wears off and you recover alertness. You may feel a bit gassy or have mild cramping, but this usually settles quickly.
- You'll need someone to drive you home, and you can usually get back to normal activities the next day, though you should take it easy for the rest of the day.

Gastroscopy post-op

Rest

You should take it easy for the rest of the day as the sedation can make you drowsy and affect your coordination and judgement.

For 24 hours following the procedure you:

- should not drive.
- operate heavy or potentially harmful machinery.
- make legally binding decisions.

Hydrate

Drink plenty of fluids to help your body recover.

Eat light

Start with light, easily digestible foods such as toast, crackers, bananas etc. Avoid heavy, greasy, or spicy foods for 24 hours.

Following the procedure

Mild discomfort and abdominal cramping may occur for a few hours after the gastroscopy. This is due to the gas used in the procedure. Walking, warm liquids, and heat packs to the abdomen can help relieve these.

A sore throat is not uncommon for two days after the procedure. This is due to the tube passing through to your oesophagus. Ice chips, warm drinks, and Difflam lozenges can usually help relieve these.

Medications

Take your medications exactly as prescribed on your medication discharge instruction sheet.

Unless otherwise directed by your doctor, all of your medications and vitamins can be swallowed as they are given. Alternatively you may crush tablets, use chewable or liquid forms. If you are uncertain how large a pill you can swallow then it is useful to use the rule that you swallow no pill larger than the top of a thumbtack.

When to seek medical advice

Contact Dr Flint at the rooms or your GP if you experience:

- Fever above 38°C.
- Severe or worsening abdominal pain for more than 2 hours.

Richard Flint Surgery Rooms | P. 03 375 4480