



York Teaching Hospital  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Having a Capsule Endoscopy

Information for patients, relatives and carers

① For more information, please contact:

**Endoscopy Unit**

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Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE  
Tel: 01904 726694

Scarborough Hospital  
Woodlands Drive, Scarborough, YO12 6QL  
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Caring with pride



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## Introduction

You have been advised to have a capsule endoscopy (PillCam). We have written this booklet to help answer some of the concerns you may have about the test. It may not answer all of your questions, if you have any worries please do not hesitate to ask:

Dr Prashant Kant: 01904 721316 (York Patients)

Dr Ajay Muddu: 01723 342490 (Scarborough Patients)

The aims of this booklet are:

- To explain what happens on the day of your test
- To tell you what preparation is required
- To answer some of the questions you may have about the test

## What is a capsule endoscopy (PillCam)?

Capsule endoscopy (or PillCam) is a test which looks for abnormalities in the small intestine. The small intestine is the middle part of the gastrointestinal tract. It is usually not possible to examine this part of the bowel using a flexible camera.



**PillCam**

## Why do I need a (PillCam) capsule endoscopy?

The commonest reason to perform PillCam endoscopy is in patients who have symptoms of abdominal pain or anaemia. Flexible camera tubes often examine the stomach and large bowel, but the small intestine is difficult to examine in this way. This test is an alternative to an MRI scan of your small intestine and allows more accurate pictures to be taken.

## How is the test done?

The capsule is the size of a large vitamin pill (32mm x 12mm). It contains two tiny video cameras on a silicone chip, which are powered by two tiny batteries and a wireless transmitter. The cameras are able to capture four images per second.

You will be asked to swallow the capsule after having a low fibre diet for a week, taking laxatives and a period of fasting. The capsule starts taking the photographs which are sent by transmitter through to sensors which are attached to your abdomen.

From there on the images go to a data recorder (pocket-size computer) which is carried around in a shoulder bag. The whole process takes up to 11 hours. We usually give you the pill camera in the morning. After 30 minutes of swallowing the camera, we will use the data recorder to make sure the pill camera has left the stomach.

We know occasionally some people have slow gastric emptying. If you are one of these people we may give you medication to increase movement in your stomach. If this is unsuccessful it may be necessary to put the pill directly into your small bowel by an endoscope. This will only be done after further discussion with you.

The monitoring equipment is removed after the capsule has passed out of your small bowel into your colon or passed out of the body, the images are then downloaded from the data recorder to a computer and this assembles the images as a video of the whole of the intestine. The video can then be reviewed by the doctor or nurse.

Results are sent to the referring doctor and GP. This usually takes between four to six weeks.

## Can there be complications or risks?

With this procedure there is the small risk the test may need to be repeated if the small intestine is not clean enough to see anything or if the camera moves through the gastric tract too quickly. Should this be the case we will contact you to re-book.

Capsule retention is the risk of failure of the pill camera to pass through the whole small bowel within two weeks. National and international experience suggests this happens to one person in over 200 procedures. Experience elsewhere suggests that when this happens, it does not pass through because of a narrowing in the small bowel which is the cause of the problem being investigated.

So non-passage of the pill camera does mean that the answer has been found. Furthermore, it rarely blocks the bowel completely.

To check passage of the capsule from the bowel, we may do an abdominal X-ray.

If there is any concern you may have a narrowed bowel we would perform a patency capsule first. This is a dummy pill that is ingested to check the small bowel is unobstructed and therefore safe to swallow the pill camera. If you require a patency capsule further information will be given to you.

There is a rare risk of the capsule going down the wrong way (aspiration) while you are attempting to swallow a PillCam capsule. There is also a low risk of skin irritation from the PillCam glue under the sleeve or silicone exposure.

Medical, endoscopic, or surgical intervention may be necessary to address any of these complications, should they occur.

## **What happens if the capsule does not pass through?**

If the capsule reveals Crohn's disease, treatment with anti-inflammatory medications may allow the narrowed part of the bowel to heal such that the pill passes spontaneously. If the capsule is at the extreme upper or lower end of the small bowel, it may be possible to retrieve it using an endoscope (gastroscope or colonoscope).

Of course, if the bowel is severely ulcerated or scarred or blocked by a tumour, an operation might be needed, not only to remove the capsule, but to treat the disease also.

It is also important to note that MRI scanning should not be performed until the capsule has been identified and removed.

## **The consent form**

Before a doctor or healthcare professional examines or treats you, they will need to gain your consent. This will be required in writing. If you later change your mind, you are entitled to withdraw consent, even after signing. A copy of the consent form will be offered to you.

## **What should I know before deciding?**

The Health professional/doctor will ensure you know enough information about the procedure to enable you to decide about your treatment. They will write this information on the consent form as well as discussing choices of treatment with you. We encourage you to ask questions and inform us of any concerns that you may have. It may be helpful for you to write these down as a reminder.

## **What are the key things to remember?**

The main thing to remember is that it is your decision. It's up to you to choose whether or not to consent to what is being proposed. Ask as many questions as you like and please express any concerns about medication, allergies or past medical history.

## **Can I find out more about giving consent?**

For further information on consent you may wish to look at the NHS Choices website as follows:  
[www.nhs.uk/conditions/Consent-to-treatment](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Consent-to-treatment)

We also have a leaflet with further details on consent called "About the Consent Form". This can be viewed on our website at [www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk) or you can ask a member of staff for a copy.

## Preparation for the test

Please wear loose fitting clothing when attending for your test.

Bowel preparation is an essential part of the examination and this involves dietary advice and use of laxatives. Your referring doctor will have indicated if you are able to take the bowel preparation.

Please note we do advise you to read the patient information leaflet enclosed in the Moviprep packet in conjunction with this leaflet. However, please follow the patient preparation instructions in this booklet for the test.

It is important that you make sure that you are not allergic to any of the Moviprep ingredients and that it does not react with any other medication you are taking.

If you experience common side effects of taking Moviprep i.e. vomiting, bloating and stomach cramps try drinking the Moviprep more slowly.

If you experience other side effects or have any questions regarding the Moviprep please contact the Endoscopy Unit on:

The York Hospital: 01904 726694

Scarborough Hospital: 01723 385287

Fibre in your diet takes a long time to be digested and can still be present in your bowel even after taking Moviprep. We recommend that you eat a low fibre diet for one week before your procedure. The following table identifies which foods you may eat and those which should be avoided.

## One week before your procedure

	<b>Foods to include</b>	<b>Foods to avoid</b>
<b>Meat / Fish</b>	Minced or well-cooked lean beef, lamb, ham, veal, pork, poultry, fish, shellfish.	
<b>Fruit / Vegetables</b>	Potatoes - boiled, creamed, mashed or baked (no skins).	All fruit and vegetables.
<b>Pasta / Rice</b>	Plain macaroni, spaghetti, noodles. Plain boiled white rice.	Wholemeal pasta or spaghetti. Brown rice or vegetable rice.
<b>Cereals / Bread</b>	Cornflakes, crisped rice, white bread, teacakes/ plain bread rolls.	Weetabix, bran cereals, muesli, wholemeal granary bread. Bread with oats and seeds.
<b>Biscuits / Pastries / Puddings</b>	Plain biscuits/crackers. Plain scones, muffins. Yorkshire pudding. Plain yogurt, jelly not red coloured.	Wholemeal biscuits/cakes. Seeded jams, fruit or nut yogurts. Bread or cakes with fruit.
<b>Other</b>	Eggs, cheese, sauce clear soup, treacle, margarine.	Pickles, chutney. Vegetable soups. Jams with rind/pips.

## **The day before your procedure**

At this stage take no further solid food only clear fluids. Examples of clear fluid include: Clear strained soup, Lucozade, tea or coffee but with little milk or no milk, Bovril or Oxo.

At 5.00pm, follow the instructions on the packet and mix the two sachets (A and B) of Moviprep together. Dissolve the powder into one litre of water and drink this over the next couple of hours. You may mix the drink with lime cordial if you require. Loose bowel movements may occur any time after you take the Moviprep.

If you experience common side effects of taking Moviprep i.e. vomiting, bloating and stomach cramps try drinking the Moviprep more slowly.

Please continue to drink only clear fluids till your admission.

## Medication

Please stop taking iron tablets (ferrous sulphate) seven days before the test.

**Do not take any medication on the day of the test. The nurse will advise you when you can take your medication.**

If you are diabetic or require further advice about your medications please contact:

Endoscopy Unit at York Hospital:  
Tel: 01904 724527

or

Endoscopy Unit at Scarborough Hospital:  
Tel: 01723 342070

Do bring your other tablets or medicines with you so that you can take them after you have had your procedure.

## **On the Day of the test**

On arrival at the hospital please go into the main entrance and up to the Endoscopy Unit.

## **When you arrive at the Endoscopy Unit**

Make your way to the reception desk where you will be checked and shown to the nurse. A nurse will visit you for pre-assessment. This involves checking your pulse and blood pressure, checking your preparation and whether you have any allergies before confirming your arrangements for the day.

Please feel free to ask questions or voice any worries you may have regarding your test.

Once the PillCam capsule and data recorder are connected to each other, you will be given the capsule to swallow with a small drink of water. We will then use the real time data recorder to ensure the capsule reaches your stomach. We will ask you to go for a 20 minute walk (if you are able).

When you return from your walk, we will use the real time data recorder to check the capsule is in the small bowel.

Two hours after the capsule reaches your small bowel, you will be able to start drinking clear fluids again. After four hours you can resume your normal food and fluid intake including fluids with milk.

## **What happens after the test?**

You may go home or may need to stay for further attempts to ensure the PillCam capsule has passed your stomach.

If you go home, you will be asked to return between 4.30pm and 5pm to the Endoscopy Unit and the nurses will remove the recorder device. This only takes a few minutes. You will then be able to go home and can resume your normal activities immediately. The PillCam passes naturally with a bowel movement, usually in 24 to 72 hours.

Once you have swallowed the PillCam capsule and until it has passed from your body, you should not go near any source of powerful electromagnetic fields, such as one created by an MRI device.

## **Getting your results**

Results can take up to four to six weeks. This is because of the time it takes to look at the large number of images. Results are sent to your referring doctor and GP. If results are required urgently your doctor can contact us.

## **Is there anything I should look out for when I go home?**

If you have any problems when you go home, or are feeling worse than you expected, please contact the Endoscopy Unit on:

The York Hospital: 01904 726694

Scarborough Hospital: 01723 385287

## **Frequently asked questions and answers**

### **1. If my symptoms have stopped before the capsule endoscopy, should I still come for the test?**

Yes. It is important that you still come for the test. Your doctor has organised this test to check for abnormalities of the small intestine.

### **2. Will it hurt?**

No. These examinations are not painful.

### **3. Can I drive home after the procedure if I choose?**

Yes. There are no after effects from the test.

## 4. Can I park at the hospital?

Yes. The following car parks are available

**York Hospital:** Our multi-storey car park (MSCP) is open for patient and visitor parking. This operates a 'pay on exit' system. There are designated spaces for blue badge holders who can park for free. If you are being dropped off, there is a drop off zone just outside the main entrance. The nearest public car park is at Union Terrace, which is about a 10 minutes' walk away.

**Scarborough Hospital:** Our 262 space car park is designated for patient and visitor use only and is located to the right of the main entrance, near the helipad. The car park operates on a barrier/pay on exit system and payments can be made by cash or card.

Other car parking spaces are available near the North Entrance, where you will need to pay and display, however visitors are encouraged to use the pay in exit car park. There are designated spaces for blue badge holders who can park for free. However, at busy times the car park becomes full and we can't guarantee spaces. If someone brings you to the hospital they can drive up to the main entrance to drop you off.

For more information including parking charges and available concessions, please visit our website on [www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk).

## **5. Can I get public transport to the hospital?**

York Hospital: Services provided by several bus companies have stops within a short walking distance of the hospital. Most services are provided by First York. For information about services call the bus information number (01904) 551400.

Scarborough Hospital: Is well served by buses, especially from Scarborough town centre. The hospital has its own EYMS Bus Service (Number 10).

For links to timetables please visit our website at [www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk).

## **6. Are there facilities for my relatives/friends to obtain refreshments while they are waiting for me?**

### **At York Hospital**

#### **Ellerby's Restaurant**

Ellerby's Restaurant is situated at the end of York Hospital main corridor and provides a catering service for staff and visitors. A variety of food and drinks are available with home cooked food, deli sandwiches, a jacket potato bar, all day fruit and yoghurt bar, a salad bar and Barista style coffee all served within the opening hours. Outside of the opening hours hot and colds meals and snacks are available from the vending machines inside the restaurant. They are open 7am to 6pm.

#### **Costa Coffee Shop**

Situated in the main foyer, the cafe has a comfortable seating area and sells hot and cold snacks, cakes and a variety of coffees. The opening hours are 7am to 8pm.

#### **Amigo store**

Newspapers, magazines, cards, sandwiches, drinks, confectionery, toiletries, stationery, gifts, lottery tickets and postage stamps can all be purchased in the shop. The opening hours are 7am to 7.30pm.

## **At Scarborough Hospital**

Pat's Place, the hospital restaurant, is located on the first floor of the North Building. Pat's Place is open for breakfast (7.30am to 10.30am), lunch (12pm to 1.45pm) and supper (4pm to 7pm), serving hot food for visitors and staff. Coffee lounge and snack vending machine facilities are available 24 hours a day.

A suppliers cart selling fresh Yorkshire produce including biscuits, cakes and chutneys is also available.

## **WRVS Coffee Bar and Shop**

The WRVS shop and coffee bar is situated in the main entrance and is open from 8am until 8pm. As well as selling newspapers, confectionary, sandwiches and drinks, the coffee bar serves hot drinks and hot food including jacket potatoes and toasted sandwiches.

## **Vending machines**

Hot drink, snack and ice cream vending machines are located in the main entrance, north wing entrance and Pat's Place.



## **Tell us what you think of this leaflet**

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact:

Dr Kant, Endoscopy Unit, The York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE, telephone 01904 721316 or email [prashant.kant@york.nhs.uk](mailto:prashant.kant@york.nhs.uk).

Content for this leaflet was taken with kind permission from a Sheffield Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust leaflet on colon capsule endoscopy.

## **Teaching, training and research**

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

## **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email [pals@york.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@york.nhs.uk).

An answer phone is available out of hours.





Providing care together in York, Scarborough, Bridlington,  
Malton, Selby and Easingwold communities

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**01904 725566**

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Owner

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