

Community Endoscopy Service

Procedural Risks

What is a Gastroscopy ?

A gastroscopy is a procedure that allows us to examine the lining of the upper part of the gastrointestinal (GI) tract. This includes the oesophagus (the tube that carries food to your stomach), the stomach and the duodenum (the first part of the small bowel).

The procedure is useful in diagnosing a range of symptoms and for monitoring pre-existing conditions.

A flexible tube smaller than your little finger is passed trans nasally (through your nose), down the oesophagus and into the stomach by a specially trained doctor or nurse, called an endoscopist. We will numb your nose and throat with an anaesthetic spray to minimise discomfort.

The purpose and intended benefit/s of this procedure is/are:

- To aid diagnosis and formulate a treatment plan for routine diagnostic investigations, planned surveillance or follow up.

Possible side effects of the procedure:

- Mild abdominal discomfort and bloating.
- Sore nose and/or throat.

Possible complications of the procedure:

- The main risks are of mechanical damage to teeth or bridgework.
- Perforation or tear of the lining of the stomach or oesophagus (risk approximately 1 in 2000 cases) and bleeding which could entail you being admitted to hospital. Certain cases may be treated with antibiotics and intravenous fluids. Perforation may require surgery to repair the hole.
- Bleeding may occur at the site of biopsy, and nearly always stops on its own.
- Pneumonia, caused from aspiration (when liquid/food from the stomach enters the lungs), this is very rare.
- Nosebleeds can occur if the endoscope causes trauma to the nostrils.

Alternative treatment:

- In the unusual event that you are not a suitable candidate for a gastroscopy your referrer (GP or Consultant) may be able to refer you for an alternative procedure – such as a CT scan. Please be aware that this decision will be made and arranged by your referrer and will be made dependent upon your symptoms.