

GASTROSCOPY – PATIENT INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

What is a gastroscopy and how is it performed?

Gastroscopy (or upper gastrointestinal endoscopy) is a procedure to inspect the oesophagus (food pipe), stomach and duodenum (first part of the small bowel) using a thin, flexible tube with a camera. An intravenous sedative is given prior to the procedure so that you will be sleepy during the examination. You may be given a local anaesthetic spray to numb the throat. The instrument is passed via the mouth and advanced along the oesophagus, stomach and into the duodenum. Biopsies (tissue samples) may be taken during the procedure. The test usually takes between 10 and 20 minutes. You will not be in any pain or discomfort and will be able to breathe normally throughout.

What are the risks of gastroscopy?

Any medical procedure carries some risk, however gastroscopy is usually a simple and safe procedure and complications are rare. Serious problems such as anaesthetic complications, bleeding or gut perforation (tear) occur in approximately 1:10,000 cases.

If you wish to have a more detailed discussion about potential risks, please contact Qld Specialist Physicians prior to the procedure (Tel: 4646 3237).

Instructions for Gastroscopy

Please notify Qld Specialist Physicians if you are pregnant, diabetic, take warfarin, suffer from disease affecting the heart valves, or have a pacemaker.

An empty stomach is essential for a safe examination, so you should have nothing to eat or drink for six hours before the examination. You may have your normal medications with a small sip of water.

If your procedure is planned for the morning, have nothing to eat or drink after midnight.

If your procedure is planned for after 1.00pm, you may have a light breakfast (e.g. piece of toast and a drink) PRIOR to 7.00am on the morning of the procedure.

What happens after the gastroscopy?

Following the gastroscopy, you will remain in the hospital recovery area until the effect of the medication wears off. You may experience slight discomfort or bloating and possibly a sore throat.

Because the sedation given may interfere with your judgement or ability to concentrate, you should not drive a motor vehicle, travel on public transport alone, operate dangerous machinery or sign important documents for the remainder of the day. **It is necessary to arrange for a relative or friend to accompany you home.**

If you develop severe abdominal or chest pain, fever, vomit blood or pass black bowel motions, you should contact your doctor, Dr Gaffney or go to the nearest hospital's Emergency Department.