

Gastroscopy

Patient Information



What is Gastroscopy?

Gastroscopy is a procedure that allows the doctor to look directly at the inner lining of the oesophagus (food pipe), stomach and duodenum (first part of the bowel) to help detect any abnormalities that may be the cause of your symptoms. It is a safe procedure that is usually carried out in the Endoscopy Suite.

How is the procedure conducted?

A special long and flexible tube with a light at its tip (gastroscope) is passed through the mouth into your stomach to visualize the lining of your oesophagus, stomach and duodenum. If the doctor finds any abnormality, a biopsy (sample of the abnormal tissue) may be taken for analysis of the tissue in the laboratory. The sample tissue is taken through the gastroscope using tiny forceps.

How do I prepare for the procedure?

When coming for the procedure, you should keep the following things in mind:

- You need to have the results of the following blood tests available before the procedure: Prothrombin Time (PT), Hemoglobin (HB) and platelet count.
- Do not eat anything solid 6-8 hours before the procedure and stop the intake of clear liquids such as juices and water four hours before the procedure.
- Make sure you have one attendant to accompany you.
- Tell your doctor, if you are taking any blood thinning medications, as these may need to be stopped.
- Take your antihypertensive medication as per schedule.
- Consult your doctor, if you are on anti-diabetic medications.
- Inform your doctor if you have any allergies or have had a bad reaction to any procedure in the past.

On the day of admission:

- Leave all jewelry and valuables at home.
- You need to bring your MR card and admission form to the Endoscopy suite.
- Bring your blood test reports if done outside The Aga Khan University Hospital.

What happens in the Endoscopy Suite?

- The doctor will explain the test and will ask you to sign a consent form. If you have any concerns, please discuss with your doctor.

- You will be asked to wear a hospital gown and to remove any false teeth. If you have a loose tooth, make sure to inform the nursing staff at the time of your assessment.
- The nursing staff will take your temperature, pulse, blood pressure, respiratory rate and O₂ saturation.
- The nursing staff will also insert an Intravenous (IV) cannula to administer medication before the procedure to make you feel more relaxed.

What happens during the procedure?

- You will be asked to lie down on the stretcher on your left side.
- A nurse will stay with you to monitor your vital signs and assist the doctor as necessary.
- The doctor may spray the back of your throat with a local anaesthetic to numb the area. This will protect you from gagging when the tube is introduced into your mouth. You may be given an injection to make you feel sleepy and relaxed.
- To keep your mouth open, a plastic mouthpiece will be placed between your teeth.
- It will not hurt when the doctor inserts the gastroscope into your mouth. You will be able to breathe normally throughout the procedure.
- It may take up to 10 minutes to complete the test.
- You may feel some bloating (sensation of gas). This is due to the air introduced into your stomach to allow a clearer view for the doctor. At the end of the test, the air will be removed.

What happens after the procedure?

- You will be asked to rest for 30 minutes. You may have to wait longer, until you are able to drink a cup of juice.
- Your throat may feel a little irritable for the rest of the day; gargle with warm water as this will have a soothing effect.
- If there is any air left in your stomach, you may feel bloated. This sensation will pass without any need of medication.
- You will be given a follow-up appointment at gastroenterology clinic based on your doctor's advice.
- At the time of discharge, you will get an electronically typed report containing pictures from your sigmoidoscopy, medication prescription, discharge instructions, any additional investigations which might be needed and instructions for your next follow up with your doctor.

Important instructions:

You can start your routine diet as soon as you are able to drink liquids. Diet may vary as ordered by your doctor.

- Do not drive for at least six hours. If you are going home immediately after the procedure, it is important that someone is available to drive you back home.
- You will need to rest for the remainder of the day to recover from the medications given during the procedure.
- Do not operate any machinery for the rest of the day.
- Refrain from smoking, chewing tobacco and alcohol.