

FOCUS ON ENDOSCOPY

We talk to gastroenterologist Dr Derek Chan and find out more about endoscopy



“Most patients who haven’t had an endoscopy before are understandably nervous. I try to reassure my patients though that these tests are quick, safe and very routine”

Treatments can also be performed using small instruments passed through the camera. This can be done to treat bleeding ulcers, open up areas of narrowing (strictures), removal of polyps (common internal growths) and treatment of haemorrhoids.

How do you prepare for an endoscopy?

Depending on which part of your body will be examined, you will be asked to stop eating and drinking for a few hours beforehand.

If you are having a colonoscopy or flexible sigmoidoscopy you will also be given laxatives to clear the bowel of stool so that a good views can be obtained.

How long does it take? These are relatively quick procedures. A gastroscopy will take about five minutes, while a colonoscopy will take approximately 20-30 minutes.

They are normally done as a day case and you will be in the hospital for only a few hours.

Do I need sedation?

For a gastroscopy everyone is given a local anaesthetic throat spray that numbs the back of your throat. About half of people elect to have some sedation, when you are given an injection to make you feel more relaxed and slightly sleepy. For a colonoscopy, as this can be slightly more uncomfortable, most people have sedation and an injection of painkiller.

How long does it take to get results?

Following your endoscopy, before you go home, you will receive a report of what was seen during your procedure. Biopsies generally take 10-14 days for results to come through.

Are people nervous before these tests?

Most patients who haven’t had an endoscopy before are understandably nervous. I try to reassure my patients though that these tests are quick, safe and very routine. The sedation is also tailored to individual requirements, so that for a more anxious patient I would aim to provide a more generous amount of sedation.

Derek Chan (BSc MBBS MRCP MRCP (Gastro) is a Consultant Gastroenterologist, nutrition lead and training lead at St Helier Hospital. He also consults privately at Spire St Anthony’s Hospital and Ashtead Hospital.

Dr Chan consults at the following hospitals:

Spire St. Anthony’s Hospital
801 London Road, Cheam, SM3 9DW
020 3131 5083
www.spirehealthcare.com/spire-st-anthonys-hospital

Ashtead Hospital
The Warren, Ashtead, KT21 2SB
01372 221 400
www.ashteadhospital.co.uk

St Helier Hospital
Wrythe Lane, Carshalton, SM5 1AA
020 8296 2000
www.epsom-sthelier.nhs.uk
You can read reviews by Dr Chan’s patients at www.iwantgreatcare.org/doctors/dr-derek-chan-1

What is an endoscopy?

Put simply, this is a very common procedure to view the inside of your body using a thin flexible tube with a camera and light source attached. The image is transmitted and viewed live on a screen. Small samples can also be taken through the camera for further analysis.

What are the different types of endoscopy you perform? I perform gastroscopy (examination of the oesophagus, stomach and beginning of the small bowel), flexible sigmoidoscopy (examination of the lower third of the large bowel) and colonoscopy (examination of all the large bowel).

When would an endoscopy be needed?

Most people at some point in their life will have an endoscopy. It is used to investigate a large number of symptoms and problems such as: acid reflux, swallowing difficulties, nausea and vomiting, abdominal pain, bloating, vomiting blood, unexplained weight loss, unexplained anaemia, diarrhoea, constipation and blood in stools.

Dr Derek Chan
(BSc MBBS MRCP MRCP(Gastro)
info@drderekchangastro.com,
www.drderekchangastro.com