



**University
Hospitals Sussex**
NHS Foundation Trust

Colon capsule endoscopy

Endoscopy / Imaging

Patient information



What is this information about?

This leaflet explains your **Colon Capsule Endoscopy** appointment, including:

- Why you have been referred
- What the test involves
- Benefits and risks
- How to prepare
- What happens during your appointment
- When you will receive your results
- Possible findings.

Why have I been given this information?

You have been referred for a capsule endoscopy. This information will help you understand what to expect and how to prepare.

Following the preparation instructions carefully is very important to ensure clear images and accurate results.

Why have I been referred for a capsule endoscopy?

You have been referred to investigate symptoms such as:

- Change in bowel habit
- Positive stool test (FIT)
- Abdominal symptoms.

What is a Colon Capsule capsule endoscopy?

A capsule endoscopy involves swallowing a small capsule (about the size of a large vitamin tablet) that contains a camera.

As the capsule travels through your digestive system, it takes thousands of pictures of your bowel. These images are recorded on a device worn on a belt.

What are the benefits?

- Non-invasive test
- No sedation required
- Can be done mostly at home
- Lower risk compared to colonoscopy
- Allows detailed imaging of the bowel.

What are the risks?

- The capsule may not pass fully through the bowel (incomplete test)
- Capsule retention (very rare, more likely if there is bowel narrowing)
- Occasionally, abnormalities may not be detected.

A full pre-assessment will be carried out by the colon capsule nurse with you over the telephone. It is done around a week before your colon capsule endoscopy is due. This is to make sure the procedure is right for you. To have a colon capsule you should be:

- below 55 years of age
- fit and with no other significant health problems (comorbidities)
- able to follow the instructions for what you must do after you have swallowed the capsule.

During this assessment, you will also receive instructions about your medications, including guidance on iron tablets and any other relevant medicines.

How do I prepare for my appointment?

3 to 5 days before the procedure (low fibre diet)

To help improve bowel cleansing, please follow a low fibre diet as much as possible.

Food to eat	Food to avoid
White flour products (bread, pasta, etc.)	All fruits and vegetables
White rice and potatoes	Any wholegrain product
Eggs	All breakfast cereals
Oils (olive, rapeseed, soy)	Instant soup
Dairy products including butter, margarine, and mayonnaise	Red meat
Unseasoned white meat or fish	All legumes (peas and beans)
Chocolate and sweets (without fruits or nuts)	All types of nuts
Tea and coffee with milk and sugar / sweeteners	Fruit or vegetable juice

Good bowel preparation is essential. Please follow the instructions carefully.

Day before your procedure (summary table)

Step	Instructions
Diet	Clear liquid diet only for the entire day. No solid food.
Fluids	Drink approximately 8 glasses (240 ml each) of clear fluids to stay hydrated.
Allowed drinks	Water, clear/fizzy sports drinks, tea or coffee (no milk), apple juice or clear cordial (for example, white grape), ice lollies, flavoured jelly, boiled sweets (allowed to dissolve slowly).
Not allowed	No red or purple drinks, no broth, no soup.
Plenvu (evening)	Take Dose 1 between 6 and 8 pm, 1 cup every 15 minutes. Continue clear fluids after 9 pm. Be aware, your medications will be clearly labelled by the pharmacy and come with a measuring cup.
Helpful tips	Use a straw or sports bottle; sip clear fluids between doses; lemon/boiled sweets may help taste.

Day of procedure (summary table)

Step	Instructions
Morning medications	Take regular medicines as instructed by your colon capsule nurse.
Plenvu (morning dose)	Finish remaining Plenvu between 6 and 8 am, 1 cup every 15 minutes.
After Plenvu	Do not eat or drink anything unless told by clinic staff.
Arrival	Attend clinic at your allocated time.
Consent Form and Prucalopride	You will be called into the procedure room, and the capsule nurse will go through the consent form with you. You will then be asked to take 1mg Prucalopride approximately 45 minutes before capsule ingestion. This is a pro kinetic medication that encourages the capsule to leave stomach quickly.
Sensor setup	Wear sensor belt or adhesive sensor array connected to data recorder.
Capsule Further medications	Swallow PillCam capsule with water when instructed. We will talk to you about what medications you should take after you have swallowed the capsule and give you a leaflet about this.
Activity	Remain active with toilet access nearby at all times.
Clothing tip	Wear loose, dark clothing for comfort.

During the procedure (alert system)

During the procedure, the recorder will beep and vibrate to alert you need to do something. Check the alert number displayed on the screen, then acknowledge the alert by pressing the blue button which is in the top right-hand corner of the recorder.

Alert	What you need to do
Alert 0	Do not eat or drink anything. Remain active.
Alert 1	Dilute 30ml sodium phosphate booster in water and drink. Then drink approximately 1 litre of water over 1 hour. Continue normal activity. Wait for next alert.
Alert 2	Take 15ml sodium phosphate booster diluted in water. Drink around half a litre of water over 1 hour. Wait for next alert.
Alert 3	Insert 10mg bisacodyl suppository into your bottom (rectum) and allow to dissolve. Wait for next alert.
Alert 4	You may be asked to eat a small meal. Continue waiting for End of Procedure alert.
End of Procedure	Your test is complete. The capsule will pass naturally in your stool. Do not retrieve it.

During the procedure: important instructions

- Stay active and mobile throughout the day
- Do not lie down or sleep unless you need to
- Continue to drink clear fluids until instructed otherwise
- Always make sure a toilet is nearby. You are likely to have loose poos (loose stools, diarrhoea). There are toilets in the unit. Ask for an incontinence pad in the unit if you need one. Arrange to have incontinence pads at home if you think you may need them. You are more likely to have loose stools when you are there rather than when you are in the unit.

How long does the test take?

- **Recording time: 6 to 12 hours.** This depends on how active your bowel is and how quickly the capsule passes through it. This varies from person to person.
- You may need to wear the equipment for most of the day.

When will I receive my results?

- The images are reviewed by a specialist doctor and will take about 2 to 3 weeks to complete
- A letter explaining the results will be sent to you and to your GP.

If further tests are required, you will get a call to discuss this.

After the procedure

- The capsule is single-use and will pass naturally in your poo (stool)
- You do not need to retrieve it
- You will return the recording equipment as instructed.

You can return to normal activities once your appointment is complete.

What conditions may be found?

Common findings:

- Polyps
- Inflammation of the bowel
- Diverticular disease.

Other findings:

- Sources of bleeding
- Changes suggestive of IBD (inflammatory bowel disease).

Rare findings:

- Bowel cancer

If anything concerning is found, further investigations (such as colonoscopy or CT scan) will be arranged.

Who can I contact for support?

If you develop severe abdominal pain, vomiting, or a high temperature, do seek urgent medical attention by contacting 111 or attending your nearest A&E department.

For non-urgent queries or advice, please contact your **Colorectal Faster Diagnosis Service** team:

Brighton Patients

01273 696955 Ext. 64154

uhsussex.colorectalfasterdiagnosisservice@nhs.net

Worthing and St Richard's Patients

If you leave a voicemail, a member of the team will return your call as soon as possible.

01243 831751

uhsussex.wg.srh-fds-navigator@nhs.net

Monday to Friday 8.00am to 4.00pm

**Today's research is tomorrow's treatments.
That's why UHSx is proud to be a research-active Trust.**

Find out how you can get involved. Visit our website
**[www.uhsussex.nhs.uk/research-and-innovation/
information-for-patients-and-public](http://www.uhsussex.nhs.uk/research-and-innovation/information-for-patients-and-public)**
or scan the QR code



This leaflet is intended for patients receiving care
in Southlands, St.Richards and Worthing hospitals

Ref. number: 2765
Publication date: 09/2026 Review date: 09/2029

© University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust Disclaimer:
The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way
intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.