

How to contact us

If you are currently attending Whiston Hospital or St Helens Hospital ask your doctor or nurse to contact us.

If you are at home you can reach us on the following numbers:

0151 430 1189

Our normal working hours are Monday to Friday, 8am until 5pm for the exception of bank holidays

Whiston Hospital
Warrington Road,
Prescot, Merseyside, L35 5DR
Telephone: 0151 426 1600

St Helens Hospital
Marshall Cross Road,
St Helens, Merseyside, WA9 3DA
Telephone: 01744 26633

 /sthknhs  @sthk.nhs
www.sthk.nhs.uk

What Are Staging Investigations?

This leaflet can be made available
in alternative languages / formats on request.

如有需要，本传单可提供其他语言/版式
此單張的其他語言/格式版本可按要求提供

Na żądanie ta ulotka może zostać udostępniona
w innych językach/formatach.

Author: Nurse Specialist
Department: Gastroenterology
Document Number: STHK0925
Version: 7.1
Review Date: 01 / 11 / 2023

What are Staging Investigations

As you are aware you have been informed that you have an abnormality in your stomach/oesophagus. It is now important to carry out some further tests so a decision can be made as to what treatment/intervention is appropriate for you. These are known as staging investigations.

The following is a list and description of some or all of the investigations you may require. Not all of the following tests may be appropriate for you; your Consultant/Nurse will let you know which are necessary for you.

CT Scan (Computed Tomography): Following your gastroscopy a CT scan of your chest and abdomen may be requested. This is a type of x-ray, but shows the body in slices and produces a more detailed picture.

This will be done as an outpatient and is a painless procedure. You should receive your date for the test within a few days from the request being made. You will not be allowed to eat or drink 4 hours before the test. The test will take approximately 10 minutes and you may be required to take a special drink prior to the test being performed which is a harmless dye, which will make your intestines more visible. A member of staff will insert a cannula (a special needle) into your vein in which a dye will be inserted to highlight your other organs which will enable a more detailed view on CT scan.

Gastroscopy: You may have had this test before but it is sometimes necessary to repeat again to obtain a more accurate measurement of the abnormal area in your gullet/stomach or further biopsies may need to be taken if we did not obtain sufficient information from the previous biopsies. Also the previous test may not have been carried out by your current surgeon/physician and they may need to view the site for surgery/treatment options.

Endoscopic ultrasound: This is a special scan of your gullet (oesophagus). It is performed in a similar way to your gastroscopy. You are given sedation for the procedure and it usually takes approximately 10 minutes to do. This will give your Consultant more detailed information of your disease than the gastroscopy.

What are Staging Investigations

PET (Positron Emission Tomography): This is a sensitive, sophisticated scanner that produces images that can identify small abnormal areas that may be undetected on other tests. You may require a PET scan following your CT scan; your Consultant/Specialist Nurse will let you know if you need to have this test done.

You will be nil by mouth 6 hours before the test (except water) and when you arrive for your PET scan you will be given an injection of a tracer that aids detection of any abnormalities. Once the tracer had been injected it will be necessary for you to lie down and relax for approximately an hour while the tracer is absorbed into your body. You will then be scanned in a similar way to the CT scan.

Laparoscopy: This is carried out under a general anaesthetic and is not always necessary. This procedure involves inserting a laparoscope (telescope) through a small incision in the abdomen; air is then pumped in to expand the space inside enabling the surgeon to have a clear view of your internal organs and may take small samples from the lining of your stomach to send to the laboratory for testing.

Pulmonary function: This is to measure how well your lungs are working and to discover if you have any breathing difficulties. The test involves blowing into a special machine, which records your respiratory capacity.

Echocardiogram: This is scan of the heart. It is a painless procedure that is carried out as an outpatient. This looks at the function of the chambers of the heart.

Blood count: These are requested so we can detect any drop in your Hb (blood count) and monitor the function of some of your other body organs. If your Hb (blood count) is low we can prescribe treatments to resolve this problem. They also help to assess if you have any deficits in your nutritional requirements which may require replenishing before commencing treatment.