

Endoscopy

tips

What is it?

An endoscopy is a medical procedure that you will need to have before your surgery. A long thin tube with a small camera inside is passed into your body through your mouth to your oesophagus and stomach.

You will be given medicine to numb your throat and offered sedation to help you to feel relaxed. If you have sedation, you will need to make sure that you have transport arranged to get you to and from the hospital on the day, as you will not be able to drive afterwards.

The endoscopy should take no more than ten minutes to complete, and you will be lying down for this procedure.

You can still breathe normally and swallow during this procedure.

How do I prepare for this?

You will be asked to stop eating at least six hours before the procedure.

Will it hurt?

An endoscopy is not usually painful, but it may feel uncomfortable. At first you may feel as though you want to vomit. This should stop once the camera reaches the stomach, and sedation will also help with this.

“What if I am feeling nervous or worried about this?”

Many people feel anxious or worried about the endoscopy procedure.

Here are some strategies that may help you:

- Firstly, please know you will be able to **breathe normally** during the procedure.
- During the procedure you may want to **focus on a different part of your body**:
 - For example, your hands. Using one hand, use your index finger to slowly trace up and down the fingers of the opposite hand. This may help control your breathing.
 - While doing this, notice the sensation of touch by gently stroking your hand, or fingers across the opposite hand. You may sense a tickling, notice areas of dryness or softness, warm or cool parts, and firmness or tenderness. Even running your hands or fingertips over your clothes or the hospital couch, focusing on the sensations of touch can help your mind to shift your focus away from the procedure. This can also help you to feel more relaxed.
- **Visualise a safe place**. It may help if you close your eyes and imagine a place where you feel calm and relaxed. This may be a real place or made up. Take time in your imagination to explore this place; what can you see, hear, touch, smell, taste?
- **You can ask for sedation**, if you are worried you will feel too anxious or tense during the procedure.