



Patient & Family Guide  
2018

# Capsule Endoscopy

Aussi disponible en français :  
*Endoscopie par capsule* (FF85-1854)



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# Capsule Endoscopy

Please read this complete booklet  
as soon as possible.

## What is a capsule endoscopy?

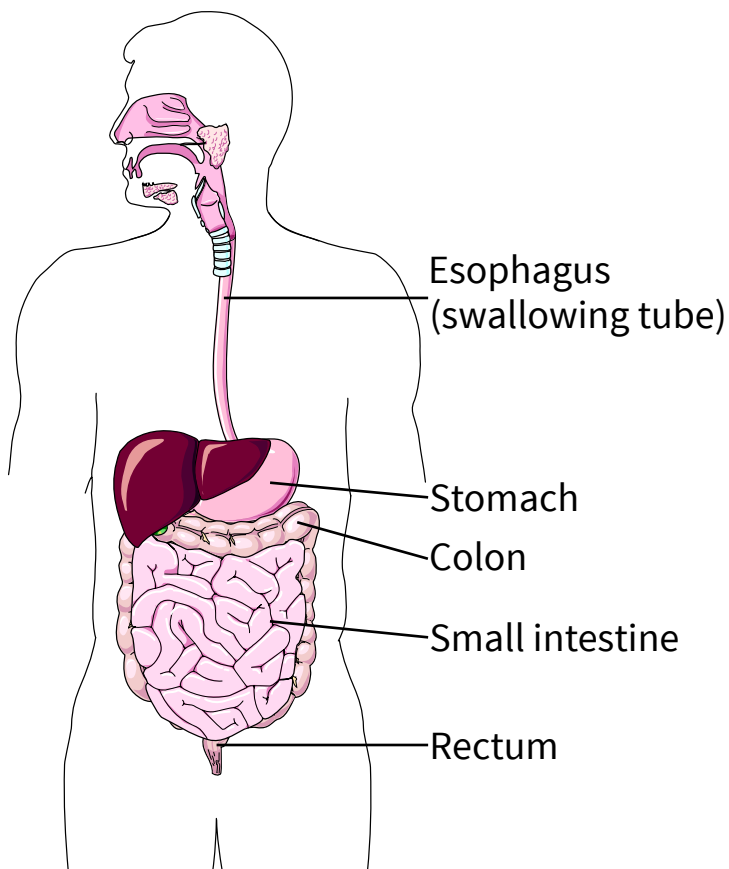
This is an exam of your digestive tract. The doctor will look at the lining of the middle part of your gastrointestinal (GI) tract, called the small intestine. This part of your GI tract is hard to reach with other methods. Capsule endoscopy may also be called “capsule enteroscopy” or “wireless capsule endoscopy.”

You will swallow a capsule, about the size of a large vitamin. The capsule, or “pill cam,” has a light and a camera. The camera takes pictures as it moves through your digestive system.

These pictures are sent to a small recording device you wear on your body on the day of the test.

Your Endocapsule Gastroenterologist (GI doctor) will review these pictures later and give a report to your specialist and family doctor.

This test can help find the source of low iron, stomach pain or diarrhea. The capsule can see areas of the GI tract that some other tests can't, such as colonoscopies or gastroscopies.



## **Why do I need a capsule endoscopy?**

The most common reason for a capsule endoscopy is to check for the cause of bleeding from the small intestine. This part of the bowel cannot be reached by traditional upper endoscopy or colonoscopy tests. It may also be used for finding polyps (abnormal tissue growths), inflammatory bowel disease (e.g. Crohn's disease), ulcers and tumours of the small intestine.

# How should I get ready for my procedure?

## Before the procedure

Check with your specialist or family doctor if it is OK for you to stop your usual medications on the test day until 10 a.m. If you have trouble with swallowing, please check with your specialist or family doctor to find out if you can safely do this test.

### 7 days before the procedure:

- Stop taking any iron supplements. This does not include multivitamins, even if they have iron.

### Day before the procedure:

- Drink only clear fluids from noon until 9 p.m.  
Clear fluids include:
  - › Water
  - › Apple juice
  - › Gatorade®
  - › Chicken broth
  - › Jell-O®
  - › Clear soda (not cola)
  - › Black coffee (no milk or cream)
  - › Popsicles
- **Do not eat or drink from 9 p.m. until your test the next morning.**
- You can take your evening medications with 1-2 cups of water (250-500 ml).
- **Avoid liquids that are red, purple or green.**

- Avoid milk, creamer or dairy products.
- Start drinking 2 litres of GoLYTELY® (or Klean-Prep® or CoLyte®) at 5 p.m. These products can be purchased at your pharmacy. They clean your intestinal tract so the camera can take clear pictures. Your specialist may tell you to drink 1 packet of PICO-SALAX® mixed in 1 cup of water instead. **Please check with your specialist about this.**

### **Day of the procedure:**

- Your stomach **MUST** be empty of food.
- Bring a **list** of all your medications to the test.
- You can take any critical medication (heart, blood pressure, seizure, etc.) either 2 hours before the test (at 5 a.m.) or 2 hours after the test (at 10 a.m.). You will swallow the capsule between 7 and 8 a.m. If you have any questions, check with your specialist or family doctor.
- Wear loose, comfortable clothing to the test.
- **Do not** wear any perfumed products. Nova Scotia Health Authority is scent-free and smoke-free.
- **If you need to cancel your test**, please call your specialist and your Endocapsule Gastroenterologist's office at 902-473-3721 at least 72 hours (3 days) before your exam. This gives us time to book another patient in your time slot.

## **Where do I go?**

- Please register using a self check-in kiosk in the main entrance of the Centennial or Dickson Building, Victoria General site. Next, go to the 9th floor of the Victoria Building.
- Parking is limited. Please allow plenty of time to park before your appointment.

## **During the procedure**

- A nurse will explain the procedure to you and answer any questions you have.
- You will get a capsule to swallow.
- You will be connected to a data recorder. It has a Velcro® belt to wear around your waist and a small pack to wear over your shoulder.
- You can leave the hospital and go back to your regular activities.
- **Do not get the data recorder wet.**
- **Do not do any heavy lifting or exercising.**
- Be careful not to disconnect the data recorder system, as pictures could be lost.
- After 8 hours, you will return to the Gastrointestinal (GI) Clinic on the 9th floor of the Victoria Building.

## After the procedure

- 2 hours after swallowing the capsule, you may have clear fluids (such as apple juice, Gatorade®, chicken broth, Jell-O® or water). You may start taking your usual medications.
- **DO NOT** drink any red, purple or green liquids (including Jell-O®) on the test day.
- 4 hours after swallowing the capsule, you may have a light lunch, such as soup and a sandwich.
- You will get another instruction sheet after your test.

## What happens after the test?

- The capsule will pass through your bowels. It is OK to flush it down the toilet.
- If you are not sure if the capsule has been passed, please see your specialist or family doctor. They can order an X-ray to check.
- **Do NOT have an MRI or go through airport security until it has been confirmed that you have passed the capsule. Confirmation is either by you seeing it in the toilet or by X-ray.**
- Your specialist will get a report from the Endocapsule Gastroenterologist's office. They will then get in touch with you about the results of your test. This may take 2-3 weeks.

## What else should I know?

A capsule endoscopy is a minor, non-invasive test with very little risk. As with any test, there are some things you should know:

- Rarely, the capsule will get stuck or not pass. If this happens, surgery may be needed to remove the capsule. The risk is small: less than 10 chances in 1000.
- The camera may cause a tear in the GI tract, but this is very rare and no cases have been reported in Canada.
- Call your specialist or family doctor immediately if you have any of the following after the test:
  - › unusual bloating
  - › stomach pain
  - › nausea (sick to your stomach)
  - › vomiting (throwing up)
  - › fever
  - › trouble swallowing
  - › chest pain



## **You should not have this test if:**

- You have an intestinal obstruction (blockage), stricture (narrowing), or fistula (hole). Check with your specialist if you are not sure.
- You are pregnant.
- You have trouble swallowing.

**If you have any of the above, contact your Endocapsule Gastroenterologist's office at 902-473-3721 at least 72 hours (3 days) before the exam. Your test will be cancelled until the Endocapsule Gastroenterologist has talked about your case with your specialist.**

If you have any questions or concerns, please talk about them with your doctor and/or nurse, or call your specialist. We are all here to help you.

**What are your questions? Please ask.  
We are here to help you.**

**In Nova Scotia you can call 811 to talk with  
a registered nurse about your health care  
questions 24/7.**



### **Looking for more health information?**

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Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

*Nova Scotia Health Authority promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.*

*Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!*

**Nova Scotia Health Authority**

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*Designed by: NSHA Library Services*

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If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

WI85-1300 Updated February 2018

The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.