Having a colon capsule endoscopy

A guide to the test

Information for patients
Endoscopy
Introduction

You have been advised to have a colon capsule endoscopy (pillcam colon).

We have written this booklet to help answer some of the concerns you may have about the test. It may not answer all of your questions; if you have any worries please do not hesitate to ask:

Sister Victoria Phillips / Sister Ailish Healy:
0114 271 1900  Bleep 2844

The aims of this booklet are:

- To explain what happens on the day of your test
- To tell you what preparation is required
- To answer some of the questions you may have about the test

What is a colon capsule endoscopy (pillcam colon)?

Colon capsule endoscopy (or pillcam colon) is a test which looks for abnormalities in the colon (large intestine).

The colon is the last part of the gastrointestinal tract. It is usually examined using a flexible camera, but occasionally this is not possible.
Why do I need a (pillcam colon) capsule endoscopy?

A pillcam colon endoscopy is most commonly performed when patients, for whatever reason, are unable or do not wish to undergo a colonoscopy to examine the colon. This test is an alternative to a colonoscopy (flexible camera).

How is the test done?

The capsule is the size of a large vitamin pill (32mm x 12mm). It contains two tiny video cameras on a silicone chip, which are powered by two tiny batteries and a wireless transmitter. The cameras are able to capture four images per second.

You will be asked to swallow the capsule after having a low fibre diet for 5 days, taking laxatives and fasting for 12 hours.

The capsule starts taking the photographs which are sent by transmitter through to sensors attached by sticky pads to the skin of your abdomen. From there, the images go to a data recorder (pocket-size computer) which is carried around in a shoulder bag.

This is a lengthy process and you will be in hospital for most of the day. However, in some cases the test may take longer, so we advise you to come prepared for an overnight stay. We usually give you the pill camera in the morning. Thirty minutes after you swallow the camera, we attach a portable laptop to your data recorder to make sure the pill camera has left the stomach.

We know that occasionally some people's stomachs are slow to empty. If you are one of these people, we may give you medication to increase movement in your stomach. If this is unsuccessful it may be necessary to place the pill camera using an endoscope. This will only be done after further discussion with you.
Throughout the test you will be given medication to help move the pillcam through the digestive tract. You will need to fast for most of the day.

The equipment is removed after the pillcam has been passed out of the body. The images are then downloaded from the data recorder to a computer and this assembles the images as a video of the whole of the intestine. The video can then be reviewed by the doctor or nurse.

Results are sent to the referring doctor and GP. This usually takes between 4 to 6 weeks.

**Can there be complications or risks?**

With this procedure there is a small risk that the test may need to be repeated if the colon is not clean enough to see anything or if the camera moves through the gastric tract too quickly. Should this be the case, we will contact you to re-book.

The only real risk of pillcam colon is the failure of the pill camera to pass through the small bowel. In our experience, this has happened to one person in over 200 procedures. Experience elsewhere suggests that when this happens, it does not pass through because of a narrowing in the small bowel which is the cause of the problem being investigated. So non-passage of the pill camera does mean that the answer has been found. Furthermore, it rarely blocks the bowel completely.

If there is any concern you may have a narrowed bowel we would perform a patency capsule test first. This is a dummy pill that is swallowed to check that the small bowel is unobstructed and therefore safe to swallow the pill camera. If you require a patency capsule, further information will be given to you.

**MRI scanning is not permitted until the pillcam has been excreted from the body.**
Please tell us if you are pregnant as the test should not be performed during pregnancy.

If you have a cardiac pacemaker or internal electromedical device please let us know by contacting us on the number above.

**What happens if the pill camera does not pass through?**

If the pill camera reveals Crohn's disease, treatment with anti-inflammatory medications may allow the narrowed part of the bowel to heal such that the pill passes by itself. If the pill camera is at the extreme upper or lower end of the small bowel, it may be possible to retrieve it using an endoscope (gastroscope or colonoscope). If the bowel is severely ulcerated or scarred or blocked by a tumour, an operation might be needed, not only to remove the pill camera, but to treat the disease also.

**The consent form**

Before a doctor or healthcare professional examines or treats you, they will need to gain your consent. This will be required in writing. If you later change your mind, you are entitled to withdraw consent, even after signing. A copy of the consent form will be offered to you.

**What should I know before deciding?**

The health professional / doctor will ensure you know enough information about the procedure to enable you to decide about your treatment. They will write this information on the consent form as well as discussing choices of treatment with you. We encourage you to ask questions and inform us of any concerns that you may have. It may be helpful for you to write these down as a reminder.

The main thing to remember is that it is your decision. It is up to you to choose whether or not to consent to what is being proposed. Ask as
many questions as you like and please express any concerns about medication, allergies or past medical history.

**Can I find out more about giving consent?**

For further information on consent you may wish to look at the NHS Choices website as follows:

- [www.nhs.uk/conditions/Consent-to-treatment](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Consent-to-treatment)

**Preparation for the test**

Please wear loose fitting clothing, preferably a t-shirt and trousers or shorts, when attending for your test.

Bowel preparation is an essential part of the examination and this involves dietary advice and use of laxatives. Your referring doctor will have indicated if you are able to take the bowel preparation.

**Please note: we do advise you to read the patient information leaflet enclosed in the Klean prep packet along with this leaflet. However, please follow the patient preparation instructions in this booklet for the test.**

It is important that you make sure that you are not allergic to any of the Klean prep ingredients and that it does not react with any other medication you are taking.

If you experience common side effects of taking Klean prep, i.e. vomiting, bloating and stomach cramps, try drinking the Klean prep more slowly.

If you experience other side effects or have any questions regarding the Klean prep, please contact the Clinical Investigation Unit on:

- **0114 271 2218**
Fibre in your diet takes a long time to be digested and can still be present in your bowel even after taking 4 sachets of Klean prep. We recommend that you eat a low fibre diet for the 5 days before taking your Klean prep. The table below identifies which foods you may eat and those which should be avoided.

### Days 1 - 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Foods to include</th>
<th>Foods to avoid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meat / Fish</strong></td>
<td>Minced or well cooked lean beef, lamb, ham, veal, pork, poultry, fish, shellfish.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fruit / Vegetables</strong></td>
<td>Potatoes - boiled, creamed, mashed or baked (no skins).</td>
<td>All fruit and vegetables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pasta / Rice</strong></td>
<td>Plain macaroni, spaghetti, noodles. Plain boiled white rice.</td>
<td>Wholemeal pasta or spaghetti. Brown rice or vegetable rice.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Cereals / Bread</strong></td>
<td>Cornflakes, crised rice, white bread, teacakes/ plain bread rolls.</td>
<td>Weetabix, bran cereals, muesli, wholemeal granary bread. Bread with oats and seeds.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Biscuits / Pastries / Puddings</strong></td>
<td>Plain biscuits/crackers. Plain scones, muffins. Yorkshire pudding. Plain yogurt, jelly not red coloured.</td>
<td>Wholemeal biscuits/ cakes. Seeded jams, fruit or nut yogurts. Bread or cakes with fruit.</td>
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Day 6

After breakfast have clear fluids only.

Examples of clear fluid include: clear strained soup, Lucozade, tea or coffee but with little milk or no milk, Bovril or Oxo.

At 4.00pm follow the instructions and dissolve the first sachet of Klean prep powder into 1 litre of water and drink this over the next couple of hours.

Repeat the same instructions for the remaining sachet. You may mix your sachets with lime cordial if you require. Loose bowel movements may occur anytime after the first sachet until you have taken all 2 sachets.

If you experience common side effects of taking Klean prep, i.e. vomiting, bloating and stomach cramps, try drinking the Klean prep more slowly.

Please continue to drink only clear fluids until your admission.

Medication

Please stop taking iron tablets (ferrous sulphate) 7 days before the test.

Do not take any medication on the day of the test. The nurse will advise you when you can take your medication.

If you are diabetic, or require further advice about your medications, please contact:

Sister Victoria Phillips / Sister Ailish Healy:

- 0114 271 1900  Bleep 2844

Do bring your other tablets or medicines with you so that you can take them after you have had your procedure.
Day of pillcam colon test

On arrival at the hospital please go into the main building on B Road and take the lift to P floor. Ward P1 (Clinical Investigation Unit) is clearly signed as you exit the lift. Please arrive on the Investigation Unit at 8.00am.

When you arrive at Ward P1 (Clinical Investigation Unit)

Make your way to the ward reception where you will be checked and shown to the day case facility. A nurse will visit you for pre-assessment. This involves checking your pulse and blood pressure, checking your preparation and whether you have any allergies, before confirming your arrangements for the day.

Please feel free to ask questions or voice any worries you may have regarding your test.

You will be given further bowel preparation before swallowing the pillcam.

Throughout the day you will be given further medication to help the pillcam move through your system.

After the examination you may eat and drink as normal.

What happens after the test?

You may go home when the test is complete. The test is complete when the pillcam colon has passed out of the body.

When can I get back to my normal activities?

You should be ready to get back to your normal activities immediately.
Getting your results

Results can take up to 4 - 6 weeks. This is because of the time it takes to look at the large number of images.

Results are sent to your referring doctor and GP. If results are required urgently your doctor can contact us.

Is there anything I should look out for when I go home?

If you have any problems when you go home, or are feeling worse than you expected, please contact the Clinical Investigation Unit on:

- 0114 271 2218

Frequently asked questions and answers

1. If my symptoms have stopped before the capsule endoscopy, should I still come for the test?

Yes. It is important that you still come for the test. Your doctor has organised this test to check for abnormalities of the colon.

2. Will it hurt?

No. These examinations are not painful.

3. Can I drive home after the procedure if I choose?

Yes. There are no after effects from the test.
4. Can I park at the hospital?
Yes. We have a car park, this is indicated on the enclosed map. The rates are as follows*:

**Royal Hallamshire Hospital**

- Up to 2 hours  £2.50
- Up to 4 hours  £3.70
- Over 4 hours  £8.40

Disabled parking bays in the multi-storey car park are charged at normal rate, however there are disabled parking bays on A and B Roads which are free of charge.

*Car parking charges are correct at time of printing. Please ensure you check the rates before parking.

5. Can I get public transport to the hospital?
Yes. You may use public transport. For details of how to find out which bus routes serve the hospital you are visiting contact Traveline:

- 01709 51 51 51
- [www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/timetables](http://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/timetables)

6. Are there facilities for my relatives / friends to obtain refreshments while they are waiting for me?
Yes. You will be offered refreshments by the ward staff. Refreshments can also be purchased from the WRVS, situated in the main entrance on B floor.
Please use this space to make a note of any questions you may have about your test.