

Capsule Endoscopy – how to prepare

Please read this information right away.

Your clinician has recommended that you have an exam called “capsule endoscopy.” Here is information about this exam that you need to know. It is important that you understand and follow these instructions carefully.

Your appointment is scheduled for: Date _____ Time _____

at: HealthPartners Specialty Center
Digestive Care Center
435 Phalen Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55130

If you cannot keep your appointment, please call the Digestive Care Center at 651-254-8600 at least 24 hours in advance.

What is capsule endoscopy?

- Capsule endoscopy is an exam of the lining of the middle part of your digestive tract. This includes the three parts of the small intestine. You will swallow a pill-sized video capsule that will take pictures of your intestine as it travels through it. These pictures will be sent to a data recorder you wear in a carrier pouch.
- This exam helps your doctor determine the cause for symptoms you are having. These may include abdominal pain, diarrhea, bleeding or anemia.
- When you arrive at the Digestive Care Center the morning of your exam, a nurse will place a sensor belt around your abdomen. This belt will be attached to a recording device you will wear for 8 hours. After you swallow the capsule, you may return to your daily activities with little restriction.
- You must return to the Digestive Care Center 8 hours later to have the belt removed. The capsule will pass in your stool within a few days. You may flush it down the toilet.
- A gastroenterologist (clinician who specializes in the digestive system) will study the video and prepare a report for your primary care clinician.
- There is a risk of capsule retention and obstruction (blockage) during the exam. This may require surgical removal of the capsule.
- Please tell our medical staff if you have a defibrillator or pacemaker.

How much will the exam cost?

- You should call the phone number on the back of your insurance card. Ask them to give you an estimate of the charges you will be billed for. The cost of the exam is different depending on if it is a routine screening or done to specifically look for a cause related to symptoms.

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How do I prepare for my capsule endoscopy?

One week before the exam:

- Stop taking iron tablets.

The day before the exam:

- Take only a clear liquid diet. Clear liquids are anything you can see through like water, pop, juice, broth, popsicles, or Jell-O. **Do not drink anything brown, red, orange, or purple.** (If you have diabetes, contact your primary care clinician about possible changes to your medication.)
- Purchase these items over the counter: 1 bottle of Miralax, 8.3 oz. and 64 oz. of Gatorade or Powerade. Regular Gatorade or Gatorade G2 or Powerade is okay, but **not red**. Do not substitute any other product. Refrigerate it if you wish to drink it cold. **NO RED LIQUIDS.** If you have diabetes, buy Gatorade 2 or Powerade Zero.
- Between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m., mix 1 bottle of Miralax with 64 oz. of Gatorade or Powerade in a large pitcher or bowl. Drink one 8 oz. glass of the solution every 15 minutes until the mixture is gone.
- Continue clear liquid diet, including water.
- After midnight the evening before your appointment, do not eat or drink except for necessary medication with a sip of water.
- Do not smoke for 24 hours before your exam.

The day of the exam:

- If you take morning medications, take them before 5:00 a.m.
- Please do not wear perfume, after shave or lotion. We are a scent-free area out of respect for our patients and staff.
- Dress in loose-fitting two-piece clothing. Wear a lightweight shirt or T-shirt next to your skin.
- Please bring a list of your current medications. This should include over-the-counter medications and the strength and dose of each.
- A clinician will discuss the exam with you so you can give your informed consent.
- The sensor belt will be placed around your abdomen over your shirt. The belt will be connected to the data recorder you will wear. After that, you will swallow the capsule.

After swallowing the capsule:

- Do not eat or drink for at least 2 hours. After 4 hours you may have a light snack. After the exam is completed, you may return to your normal diet.
- Contact the Digestive Care Center immediately if you have any abdominal pain, nausea or vomiting during the capsule endoscopy.

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- Until the capsule is passed in your stool, you should not be near any source of powerful electromagnetic fields. Examples include being near MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) equipment or an amateur (ham) radio.
- Sometimes, some images may be lost due to interference. On rare occasions this may result in the need to repeat the exam.
- You will have the capsule for about 8 hours. Do not disconnect or remove the belt at any time during this period.
- Since the data recorder is actually a small computer, treat it with care and protect it. Avoid sudden movement and banging the data recorder. Allow air to circulate around the device. Make sure it is not wrapped snugly in clothing or blankets.
- During the exam, you should check every 15 minutes that the small blue light on top of the data recorder is blinking twice every second. If the light stops blinking at this rate, write down the time and contact the Digestive Care Center. You should also write down the time and nature of any event such as eating, drinking, your activity and unusual sensations.
- Avoid strenuous physical activity and unnecessary bending.