

## Gastroscopy with Variceal Banding

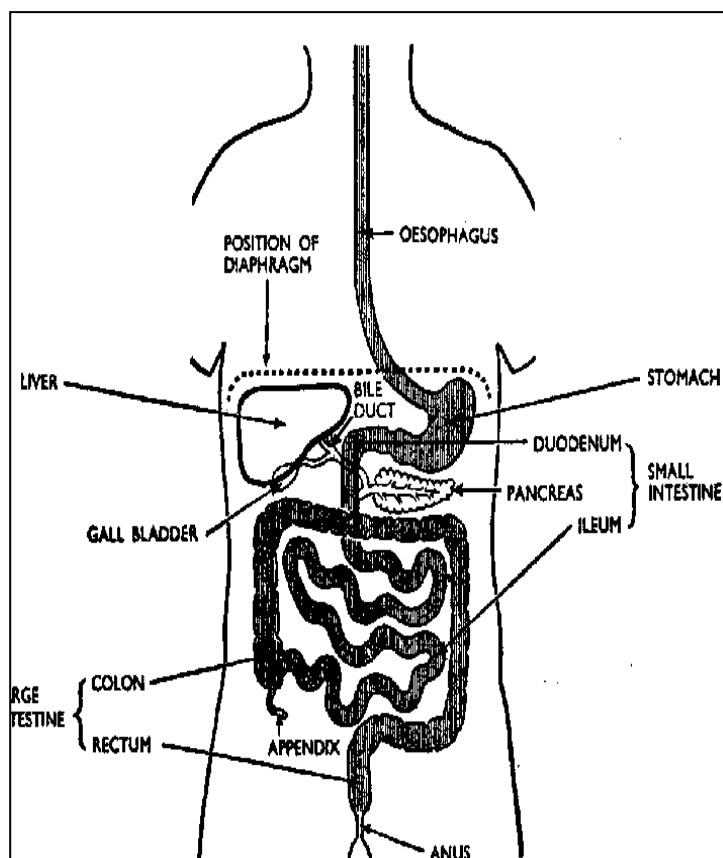
You have been advised to have this procedure performed because you have been found to have oesophageal (gullet) varices. Oesophageal varices are swollen veins, rather like varicose veins, that appear in your oesophagus. They are often caused by liver diseases but can have other causes as well. They are important to treat because they carry a risk of life threatening bleeding.

### What is Variceal Banding?

It is possible to reduce the risk of bleeding from the varices by shrinking them. One way of doing this is by applying rubber bands to the varices during a gastroscopy. This can be done to prevent bleeding from varices that have not bled previously (primary prevention), or to prevent further bleeding if there has been previous bleeding from varices (secondary prevention). Variceal banding is also used to stop actively bleeding varices in an emergency.

### What is a Gastroscopy?

A gastroscopy is a technique to look directly into your gullet (oesophagus), stomach and first part of the small bowel (duodenum) to help find out what is causing your problems.



It also allows samples of tissue (biopsy) to be taken painlessly for testing later and for the gullet to be stretched.

A flexible tube (endoscope) with a miniature video camera and carrying rubber rings is passed through the mouth to the gullet. Varices requiring treatment can be tied off with the rubber ring. This procedure does not involve surgery and is normally done under sedation. Patients are usually allowed to go home on the same day. On average up to five endoscopy sessions, at approximately monthly intervals will be required to achieve complete shrinkage of the varices. Subsequently, regular endoscopies to check the varices are done less frequently, and eventually every 6-12 months.

A video recording and / or photographs may be taken for your records.

### What are the risks associated with this procedure?

- Bloating and abdominal discomfort lasting a few hours affects 1 in 10 patients
- You may have a sore throat for 24 hours
- Mild pain behind the breast bone is quite common
- Bleeding can affect 1 in 20 patients– this may be serious enough for us to admit you into hospital for blood transfusion and further endoscopic treatment
- Perforation of the oesophagus (making a hole) is a recognised complication of less than 2 in 100 cases and would mean a stay in hospital with possibly an operation to repair it
- Upper gastro intestinal endoscopies may involve a slight risk to crowned teeth or dental bridgework
- Using sedation can cause breathing complications in up to 1 in 200 procedures, which usually are not serious

The person doing the test will discuss any questions you have about the risks associated with this procedure.

### What are the benefits of this procedure?

The procedure is to reduce the risk of your varices bleeding.

### What are the alternatives?

In primary prevention some patients are offered medication instead of banding of varices. For all other patients variceal banding is considered the best treatment. Where endoscopic treatment is not successful or possible patients may require further specialised procedures or major surgery.

### Preparing for a Gastrosocopy and having your varices banded

Please read the information enclosed carefully. If you have any queries or worries, contact the unit where you will be having your procedure.

If you are **diabetic, on blood thinners such as warfarin, clopidogrel, ticagrelor, prasugrel, rivaroxaban, apixaban, or dabigatran and edoxaban** please contact the unit for further information. Please bring any medication you are currently taking e.g. Inhalers, Insulin with you to your appointment.

If you are taking a number of tablets, please bring in your repeat prescription sheet.

### To allow a clear view the stomach must be empty, so please follow these 4 instructions:

- Do not have anything to eat for at least six hours before the test
- Do not drink milk for four hours before your test. Milk will line the stomach and not allow a clear view of the lining
- You may drink clear fluids (water, black tea or black coffee) up to two hours before the time of the appointment

### When you arrive at the hospital

Please report to the reception desk where a receptionist will check your details and direct you to the waiting area. Please be aware the appointment time, you have been given will be your admission time. Your procedure will be carried out as near to this time as possible however on occasions due to emergency patients being seen this may be delayed.

## Information for Patients

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- Please do not bring any valuables to the hospital with you
- Please do not wear any nail varnish, lipstick or jewellery (tongue studs must be removed)
- Please bring a contact number of a relative or friend

A nurse will then explain the procedure to you, to make sure you understand the benefits, and possible risks as detailed in this leaflet. The staff will want you to be as relaxed as possible for the test, and will not mind answering your questions. Provided you are happy for the procedure to be performed, you will be asked to sign the consent form to confirm your understanding of the procedure. You will be offered a copy of this.

This form also asks for your consent to further procedures that may be necessary during the procedure, including taking tissue samples (biopsies) that may be helpful in diagnosing your problem. Tissue may be used for research but you can request that no removed samples be used for this purpose on your consent form.

Just before the procedure you will also see the person who will be performing the test and they will ask you to confirm your agreement and they will also sign your consent form. If you need the help of an interpreter to understand any of this information, or on the day of the procedure, please contact the unit where you will be having the test as soon as possible.

### Information for patients arriving by ambulance

To ensure you do not miss your appointment and arrive home in a timely fashion, please when booking your transport, give the following instructions:

**For morning appointments – please arrange for the ambulance to collect you at 8 am**

**For afternoon appointments - please arrange for the ambulance to collect you at 12 noon**

### Privacy & Dignity

Delivering same-sex accommodation is a long standing commitment in the NHS as part of the drive to deliver the best possible experience for all patients (DOH 2007). Endoscopy Units within the Heart of England NHS Foundation Trust, maintain these standards either by operating single sex areas or single sex days.

Eliminating mixed sex accommodation is our priority except where it is in the overall best interests of the patient, i.e. in an emergency (they have a life threatening condition) or where delays to that patients treatment would mean deterioration in their condition. Should a patient of the opposite sex require such urgent care during your visit, we will ensure your privacy and dignity is maintained by screening off the patient of the opposite sex

On occasions medications are used during this procedure, which are known as 'off shelf'. This means medicines that are used for clinical situations which fall outside of the terms of their Summary of Products Characteristics. The use of medicines in this way is seen as a legitimate aspect of clinical practice and is often necessary in many areas of medicine. For further information concerning the use of 'off shelf' drugs, please log onto the Medicines and Healthcare product Regulatory Agency (MHRA) website.

If you need the help of an interpreter to understand any of this information, or on the day of the procedure, please contact the unit where you will be having the test, as soon as possible.

Please note relatives/friends or children should not be used as interpreters when you are required to sign your consent form. You should contact the Endoscopy Unit who will arrange for an interpreter to be present.

## Information for Patients

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### During the test

You will not have to undress, but we may give you a gown to wear. You must remove dentures, glasses and contact lenses and loosen tight clothing around the neck.

In the examination room you will be made comfortable on the couch, resting on your left side. A nurse will stay with you throughout the procedure. To keep your mouth slightly apart, a plastic mouthpiece will be put gently between your teeth or gums. When the person doing the test passes the endoscope into your stomach it will not cause pain, nor will it interfere with your breathing. The whole procedure usually takes 10- 20 minutes.

### Sedation

The procedure is normally done with sedation. Occasionally, sedation may not be required. If this is the case it will be discussed with you. If you do not want to have sedation, discuss this with your nurse and the person doing the test.

Sedation will make you slightly drowsy and relaxed but not unconscious. You will be in a state called co-operative sedation. This means that although drowsy you will still hear what is said to you and therefore able to follow simple instructions during the procedure.

Please note that we will not be able to give you sedation if you do not have a responsible adult to collect you and stay with you for 24 hours following your procedure.

You will be given oxygen through small tubes placed gently in your nostrils or through the plastic guard in your mouth. A clip will be attached to a finger or ear-lobe so that the levels of oxygen in the blood can be monitored. Your blood pressure may also be measured automatically during the procedure using a cuff around your arm

**After the test you will remain in the unit to rest for two hours. Following this, you will be asked to have a drink of water before going home.**

### Going home

It is essential that a responsible adult comes to pick you up from the unit and accompanies you home by car or taxi – **public transport is not suitable**. Please note the unit closes at 6pm. Your relative/friend should arrive no later than 5.30pm to collect you.

When you arrive home, it is important to rest quietly for the remainder of the day, with someone to look after you for 24 hours. It is advisable to have the following day off work.

For the first 24 hours following sedation **DO NOT**:

- Drive a car
- Drink alcohol
- Take sleeping tablets
- Operate any machinery or electrical items – even a kettle
- Sign any legally binding documents
- Work at heights (including climbing ladders or onto chairs)

Sedation can impair your reflexes and judgement. The effect of the sedation will have worn off by the next day and most patients will be able to resume normal activities.

You will only be able to drink fluids for the first 24 hours following your procedure. Following this you will need to gradually increase the thickness of your food over the next few days.

## Information for Patients

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### When will I know the results?

Before discharge from the unit, the nurse who has been looking after you will be able to give you a brief outline of the test results. A copy of the report will be sent to your GP or the doctor who referred you for the procedure. If a biopsy has been taken, the laboratory results will take longer, about 10 – 14 days. You will be given a copy of the report to take home with you.

If you have any questions about the test, please contact the unit where you will be having your procedure.

**If you are unable to keep your appointment please telephone the booking number which can be found on your appointment letter as soon as possible, so the appointment can be allocated to another patient.**

To contact us by telephone before your appointment (**NOTE this number should NOT be used for booking enquires**):

### Solihull Endoscopy Unit

Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm

Excluding Bank holidays

**0121 424 5394**

An answer phone is available for you to leave your name, telephone number and message. We will return your call.

### Heartlands Endoscopy Unit

Monday to Friday 8:30am to 5.30pm - Excluding Bank holidays

Nursing/Medical enquiries

**0121 424 0438**

### Good Hope Hospital - Scoping Suite Treatment Centre

Monday to Friday 8:30am to 5.30pm

Excluding Bank holidays

**0121 424 0596**

### Queen Elizabeth Endoscopy Unit

Monday to Friday 8:30am to 5.30pm

Excluding Bank holidays

**0121 371 3833**

For non-urgent messages an out of hour's answerphone is available. If you leave a message and your contact details a member of staff will contact you when the department re-opens.

**Please keep this information safe in case you wish to refer to it in the future.**

### PATIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY

Your Feedback is important to us. Please use the QR code below to complete our patient feedback survey, and let us know how we can improve our services for you.



## Information for Patients

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If you require this information in another format, such as a different language, large print, braille or audio version please ask a member of staff or email: [interpreting.service@uhb.nhs.uk](mailto:interpreting.service@uhb.nhs.uk)