Gastroscopy

Gastrointestinal examinations

During a gastroscopy, the inner lining of the esophagus, stomach, and duodenum (first part of the small intestine) is examined. This procedure is conducted using an endoscope, a flexible tube with a small camera at its tip. The endoscope is inserted through your throat. During the gastroscopy, the doctor can identify abnormalities such as inflammation, ulcers, bleeding, or growths. Photos taken during the gastroscopy are stored in your electronic medical record.

This folder contains information about the gastroscopy, how to prepare for the examination, and what to expect after the procedure.

Preparation for the examination

Before the gastroscopy, it is important to have an empty stomach. Please follow the schedule below:

If your examination is scheduled in the morning (before 12:00 PM):

- You should not eat or drink anything after midnight (12:00 AM).
- You are allowed to drink a small amount of water, tea, or coffee (without milk/powder) up to 2 hours before the examination.
- Starting 2 hours before the examination, you should not drink anything or smoke.

If you examination is scheduled in the afternoon (after 12:00 PM):

- Up to 6 hours before the examination, you can have a plain cracker (without seeds) or a piece of toast with cheese or jam (without seeds). You can also drink a small amount and take any necessary medication.
- You are allowed to drink a small amount of water, tea, or coffee (without milk/powder) up to 2 hours before the examination.
- Starting 2 hours before the examination, you should not drink anything or smoke.

Medical information

If you have diabetes and are taking medication for it, please consult your healthcare provider (the doctor who prescribed this medication) about whether and how to adjust your medication usage in preparation for the examination. Always inform us about the medication you are taking. It is important never to stop medication on your own but only under the advice of a doctor. Additionally, please inform us if you have a pacemaker or ICD.

Sedation

Your throat will be numbed with a spray if necessary. This helps reduce gagging during the examination. Additionally, you have the option to undergo the gastroscopy with or without sedation. Sedation involves pain-relieving and potentially calming medication, which helps you relax.

If you have agreed with your general practitioner or specialist to undergo the gastroscopy with sedation, we will schedule an intake appointment with you. This appointment will take place over the phone a few days before the examination. During the intake appointment, we will discuss your medication usage and assess whether it is safe for you to have sedation.

Day of the examination

- We advise you to bring extra underwear and wear comfortable clothing that does not constrict.

- If you wear dentures, we ask you to remove them in the examination room or just before the procedure.
- If you wear glasses, please take them off.
- If you have a tongue piercing, please remove it before the examination.
- You cannot speak during the examination. Therefore, please ask your questions before the procedure or write them down to ensure you do not forget.
- If you do not feel well on the day of the examination, please contact the location where you have your appointment through our Service and Information Centre (088 0100 900) and discuss whether the examination can proceed.

Daycare Unit

If you are receiving sedation, we will welcome you in the day care unit before the examination. A nurse will assist you. You will lie down on a bed. We will check your vital signs (heart rate, blood pressure, and oxygen levels) and insert an intravenous (IV) needle. Afterward, you will be wheeled into the examination room on the bed.

For a gastroscopy without sedation, you will be escorted from the waiting room directly to the examination room.

The examination

You will lie on the examination bed on your left side. If necessary, your throat will be numbed with a spray. A mouth guard will be placed in your mouth to protect your teeth and the endoscope. The nurse will apply a gel to the endoscope, which will then be gently inserted through your mouth. This might cause discomfort, but it is not painful. Once in position, the endoscope should cause minimal inconvenience. You can continue to breathe normally during the examination.

During the gastroscopy, air will be blown into your stomach through the endoscope. This might create a feeling of pressure in your abdomen. You might experience gagging or burping during the procedure. You can watch the examination on the monitor.

Sometimes, if an abnormality is found during the examination, a minor procedure might be performed immediately. A small piece of tissue may be removed for further examination (biopsy). This is not painful.

Duration of the examination

A gastroscopy procedure takes approximately 5 to 10 minutes. Sometimes, if the doctor needs to perform a minor procedure, the examination might take a bit longer. Including the preparation, you should expect the entire process to last about 20 minutes.

After the examination

- If your throat is numb, you should avoid eating or drinking for 30 minutes after the examination to prevent choking. We recommend starting slowly with a sip of water afterward. If that goes well, you can resume eating and drinking as usual.
- You might experience bloating due to the air introduced into your stomach during the examination. Burping or passing gas can provide relief.
- You might have a sore throat, which can last up to three days. This is normal and can be relieved by sucking on a candy.

For gastroscopy with sedation:

- You may feel drowsy, dizzy, or tired for several hours after the examination. You might also have limited memory of the procedure and its results due to the medication you received.

- The medication will slow down your reaction time. Therefore, you are not allowed to drive, operate a vehicle, work, use heavy machinery, consume alcohol, or make important decisions in the first 12 hours after the examination. Ensure that someone accompanies you and takes you home. This applies even if you are using public transportation or a taxi, and the person should stay with you for the first few hours.

The result

After the examination, the doctor will discuss the findings with you. If a treatment was performed during the examination, an additional follow-up might be necessary, which the doctor will inform you about. If tissue has been removed and needs to be examined in the laboratory, we aim to discuss the results with you approximately a week later. You will receive an invitation for a (telephone) appointment. The doctor who requested the examination will also receive the results of the examination.

Referral to hospital

Sometimes the doctor may find an abnormality during the gastroscopy that cannot be treated at DC Klinieken. The doctor will inform you of this. In such cases, we will refer you to a hospital for further treatment. We will discuss with you which hospital this will be.

Complications

A gastroscopy is a safe procedure and usually proceeds without problems. However, complications can occasionally occur.

- During the examination, a perforation (a tiny hole in the intestinal wall) can occur. The likelihood of this happening is very small. However, if you experience severe stomach pain or fever (above 38 degrees Celsius) after the examination, please contact us. See the phone numbers below.

For gastroscopy with sedation:

- In very rare cases, you may experience breathing or heart problems during the examination due to sedation. If these issues arise, the doctor will address them immediately with medication.

In very rare cases, an infection may occur after the examination. Please contact us immediately if you experience a fever (above 38 degrees Celsius) after the examination.

Resuscitation

All patients at DC Klinieken are resuscitated in emergency situations. Do you have a do-not-resuscitate declaration, or have you discussed with your doctor that you do not want to be resuscitated? In that case, it is crucial that you inform us about your preferences.

Emergency after a visit to DC Klinieken

In case of emergency, call: +31 (0) 88 0100 998.

Emergency after a visit to DC Klinieken Dokkum

Patients of DC Klinieken Dokkum should call the following number in case of emergency:
+31 (0) 88 0100 960.

Insurance coverage

DC Klinieken has contracts with all health insurance providers. This means that almost all healthcare services are reimbursed, similar to in a hospital. However, you do need a referral from your general practitioner or specialist. Please be aware of your own risk/excess. For more information about reimbursements and possible exceptions, please refer to our website: www.dcklinieken.nl/vergoedingen.

Questions

For more information and answers to frequently asked questions, please visit our website: www.dcklinieken.nl/contact or contact our Service and Information Centre at +31 (0)88 0100 900.

DC Klinieken

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