

ERCP

What is an ERCP?

Endoscopic Retrograde Cholangiopancreatography is a procedure in which a flexible endoscope (camera) called a duodenoscope is passed through the mouth and over the tongue into the gullet, the stomach and the first part of the small bowel, to the ampulla (opening to the bile duct). With the aid of X-ray the bile duct, gall bladder and pancreas can be assessed, allowing the endoscopist to make a diagnosis.

Preparing for the procedure

The day before the procedure you must have an INR blood test performed, a request form is enclosed. You can have this done at your GP, Peterborough City Hospital or Walk-in centre.

You need to fast, but you can have clear fluids (no milk) until two hours before your procedure.

Please be aware on the day of your ERCP you will be in the unit for six to eight hours.

Pre procedure check list

- Stop eating 6 hours before your appointment.
- Clear fluids (no milk) can be taken until two hours before your procedure.
- Please bring your medication list with you.
- Bring a book/magazine to read.
- Bring a dressing gown and slippers.
- You will be having sedation. Please arrange for someone to drive you home and stay with you overnight.
- Please bring your insulin, dextrose tablets, diabetes tablets, inhalers and heart medication with you to take after your procedure, as necessary.
- If you need an interpreter telephone Endoscopy Bookings to arrange on 01733 677433.
- If you are taking any Anti-Coagulation Therapy (medicine to thin your blood) please telephone the Nursing Team on 01733 673945 or 673944.
- All diabetic tablets to be omitted when not eating.

The procedure

All staff will be wearing lead aprons to protect against over exposure to x-rays. You will be given some throat spray which will numb your throat and reduce the gag reflex. Oxygen will be administered through your nose. You will be lying on your left side with your arm placed behind you.

A nurse will stay with you throughout your procedure; a mouth guard will be placed between your teeth to keep your mouth slightly open. Sedation and pain relief medication will be given to you at this point.

The endoscope will be passed into your mouth, over your tongue and into the oesophagus. Air is used to inflate the stomach. If you have a lot of saliva in your mouth, your nurse will use suction to remove it.

During the procedure, dye will be injected into the bile duct and the x-ray equipment will be positioned to take pictures.

The endoscopist may perform a number of other procedures to clear the bile duct:

- A small incision to enlarge the opening into the bile duct.
- A balloon can be used to remove stones.
- A stent can be placed to allow free drainage of bile, in which case a further ERCP will be necessary at a later date.
- A balloon dilatation to stretch the entrance to the bile duct.
- Occasionally, we might crush stones if they are difficult to remove.

An ERCP usually lasts up to 1 hour.

After the procedure

You will be taken from the procedure room to the recovery. You will be required to stay for observation for 2-4 hours and remain nil by mouth until it is safe to start eating and drinking. If you develop any complications you may be admitted to the ward for observation.

You must not drive for 24 hours.

Possible complications

All procedures of this nature carry a small risk of bleeding or perforation to the mucosal lining.

- Risk of perforation 1 in 50; if a perforation occurs you may need a blood transfusion or a surgical operation.
- You may develop a reaction to the sedative however this will be monitored.
- Pancreatitis: 1 in 20 may occur after the procedure, requiring a hospital stay.
- Chest infections are very rare, there is a small chance of aspiration (inhalation of fluid onto the lungs)
- There is also a slight risk to crowned teeth or dental bridgework from the procedure.

Other Information

The unit is located on level 1 and is sign posted "Endoscopy". Please make your way to the Day Treatment Unit (DTU) waiting room and check in at the reception desk.

If you may be pregnant, please contact the unit as soon as possible. This procedure uses X-ray.

If you have any question you may contact the endoscopy unit between 8am – 6pm weekdays:

Nursing Enquiries

Tel: 01733 673945

Tel: 01733 673944

Booking Enquiries

Tel: 01733 677433

Alternatively you can find more information at our website address:

www.nwanliaft.nhs.uk