

Capsule endoscopy is a procedure that allows video to be taken of the GI tract as a pill, containing a miniaturized camera, passes through your digestive system over the course of eight hours. The pill transmits images wirelessly at a rate of two frames per second to a portable computer worn on your belt; focusing primarily on the 20 or so feet of small bowel that can't be easily reached by either an endoscope or colonoscope.

## Reasons for Exam

- Gastrointestinal blood loss.
- Abnormal imaging of the gastrointestinal tract.
- Chronic abdominal pain.
- Chronic diarrhea.
- Evaluation of Crohn's disease.
- Surveillance of polyposis syndromes.

## Preparation for Procedure

It is important not to eat or drink anything for six to eight hours before the exam. You may continue to take your medications as prescribed. Additional preparation instructions may be provided by your physician.

## What to Expect During the Procedure

Capsule endoscopy is usually performed first thing in the morning after an all night fast. Upon arriving to the office, our medical assistant will obtain an informed consent for the procedure. Next, a series of sticky patches, called a sensory array, are applied to your abdomen. The video recording device and battery pack are attached to a waist belt worn by you during the procedure. After swallowing the capsule with water, you are sent home. After two hours, you can begin to consume clear liquids; food and medications are permitted four hours after ingesting the capsule. Later the same day, usually around 4:30 PM, you will be instructed to return to the office to remove the recorder device so the video can be downloaded to the computer. The capsule should pass within 48 hours and does not need to be retrieved.

## Results of the Exam

The video will be reviewed by the physician and a report generated. You will receive the results either over the phone or at a scheduled follow-up appointment.

## Benefits of Capsule Endoscopy

This technology is a significant advancement in the diagnosis of GI conditions that had been previously difficult to identify, like sources of bleeding and anemia within the small bowel, and may lead to definitive medical or surgical treatment.

## Alternative Testing

Alternative tests to capsule endoscopy include barium studies of the intestine, however these tests are very insensitive for small bowel pathology.

## Risks of the Procedure

While possible complications exist for any procedure, capsule endoscopy is safe and associated with low risk. Capsule retention is the most common concern and occurs about 5 percent of the time. Of these, less than 1 percent require surgical retrieval. Additionally, the capsule could be delayed as it passes through the small bowel, resulting in termination of the recording before the capsule completes its journey.

For more information, please visit [arizonadigestivehealth.com](http://arizonadigestivehealth.com)