



You are scheduled for a **capsule endoscopy** at UNC Hospital. Please read the following information carefully.

### **What is a Capsule Endoscopy?**

A video capsule endoscopy (VCE) is a procedure that is used to look at your small intestine for conditions such as chronic gastrointestinal bleeding, anemia, small bowel polyps, and suspected Crohn's disease. The procedure involves swallowing a capsule the size of a large vitamin pill. It is coated to make it easier to swallow. The capsule will pass through the small intestine and take multiple pictures which will be transmitted to a recorder which you will wear on a belt around your waste. The test will take about 8 hours, during which time you may leave GI procedures and go about normal activities. At the end of the recording time you will return to GI procedures to return the recorder. The images will be moved to a computer and evaluated over the next several days. The doctor who requested the procedure will receive the results of the test within approximately seven days of the test. The video capsule is disposable and will usually pass out in your bowel movement within 24-48 hours.

### **How to prepare for a Capsule Endoscopy?**

#### Seven Days before your procedure:

- If your **insurance company** must give approval for your capsule study, please make sure that the approval has been done and that there is an authorization number. If your doctor has referred you, authorization should be made through his or her office. This is especially important if you belong to an HMO plan. GI procedures front desk 919-966-5563 may be able to assist you with finding out whether the capsule study has been approved by your insurance company.

#### Three Days Before the Procedure:

- Stop taking iron supplements.
- Purchase a small bottle of Miralax (or a generic equivalent). This is available without a prescription

#### One Day Before The Procedure:

- Stop taking antacids (such as Tums and Rolaids), Pepto-Bismol, and Carafate.
- Eat a regular breakfast. After breakfast do NOT eat any more solid food. For the remainder of the day you may ONLY consume clear liquids, including water, coffee, clear broth, Jell-O, and popsicles. Avoid red or purple colored liquids.
- You may take your medications with water. If you have diabetes we recommend you take only one-half the dose of long acting insulin (e.g., Lantus) the night before the capsule endoscopy.
- The evening before the procedure mix 2 capfuls (34 grams) of Miralax (or generic equivalent) in 16 ounces (2 glasses) of water and drink all. (Note: It is NOT necessary to move your bowels after the Miralax).

Day of the Procedure:

- Before arriving:
  - At 6 AM you should take your morning medications with small sips of water.
  - Do not otherwise drink liquids or eat solid food.
  - If you have diabetes you should check blood sugar. Please discuss with your doctor any alterations needed in your diabetes medication based on when you will be eating.
  - Wear loose, comfortable 2-piece clothing. Avoid belts, dresses, pantyhose, or anything else restrictive around your waist.
  
- Morning arrival:
  - Arrive at UNC GI Procedures located in the basement of UNC Hospital at the time specified on your appointment letter (usually 8 AM).
  - You will meet with a nurse and doctor, who will review the test with you and ask you to sign an informed consent form.
  - A recorder device will be attached to you with a belt. You will then swallow the capsule with a glass of water.
  - Once the capsule is swallowed, specific instructions on diet and care of recording equipment will be given to you.
  
- Daytime:
  - The Capsule Endoscopy will last 6 to 8 hours. You will be allowed to leave, drive, and go about your daily activities (with some exceptions). We encourage you to walk around to help the capsule move through the small intestine.
  - A general guideline to the diet is as follows:
    - 0-2 hours after swallowing capsule: Do not eat or drink.
    - 2 hours after swallowing capsule: Clear liquids and medications.
    - 4 hours after swallowing capsule: Light snacks.
    - 6 hours after swallowing capsule: Regular diet.
  
- Afternoon return:
  - You will be told the exact time to return to UNC GI based on when you swallowed the capsule. Typically this is around 4-5 PM.
  - When you return a nurse will remove the equipment and answer any questions.
  - Afterwards you can resume regular diet and activities.

**If you have any questions or need to reschedule your exam please call 919-966-5563.**

**If you have an urgent question after hours then please page the GI fellow on call at 919-966-4131.**