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King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Gastric Alimetry®

Information for patients attending King's College Hospital site only

This information leaflet answers some of the questions you may have about having a Gastric Alimetry®. It explains the risks and the benefits of the test and what you can expect when you come to the hospital. If you have any more questions, please do not hesitate to contact a member of staff.

Endoscopy Unit

Reception	020 3299 7874
Pre-assessment Clinic	020 3299 2775
Nurse's Station	020 3299 4079

Confirming your identity

Before you have a treatment or procedure, our staff will ask you your name and date of birth and check your ID band. If you do not have an ID band we will also ask you to confirm your address. If we do not ask these questions, then please ask us to check. Ensuring your safety is our primary concern.

www.kch.nhs.uk

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Important information
Please make sure you read and follow the instructions in the following sections on pages 4 to 5:

- Do I need to prepare for the test?
- Do I need to stop taking my medicines?
- What will I need on the day of the test?
- Things to remember

Failure to follow this advice will result in your appointment being cancelled.

What is Gastric Alimetry®?

Gastric Alimetry® is a non-invasive test used to assess the electrical activity and function of your stomach. The test helps us understand how your stomach muscles and nerves are working and whether they may be contributing to symptoms such as feeling sick (nausea), bloating, upper abdominal discomfort, early fullness, or vomiting.

The test involves placing special adhesive electrodes on the skin of your tummy (abdomen). The electrodes record signals produced by your stomach before and after a standard test meal. The information is collected by a small wearable device and analysed by specialist software.

Why do I need this test?

Your doctor has recommended this test to investigate symptoms that may be related to stomach function.

The results may help your specialist:

- better understand the cause of your symptoms
- assess how well your stomach is functioning
- support diagnosis of gastric motility disorders (where the normal muscle contractions and nerve signals in the stomach do not work properly, leading to delayed or abnormal emptying of food into the small intestine)
- make decisions about treatment

What are the benefits?

A Gastric Alimetry® study:

- is completely non-invasive
- does not need sedation
- does not involve radiation
- provides detailed information about stomach electrical activity
- may help identify the cause of ongoing gastrointestinal symptoms
- can help us to make decisions about treatment

What are the risks?

Gastric Alimetry® is considered a very safe test.

Possible minor risks include:

- mild skin redness or discolouration where the adhesive electrodes are applied
- temporary skin irritation after removal of the adhesive
- mild discomfort from sitting or reclining for an extended period
- rare allergic reaction to adhesives

Please inform staff if you have:

- adhesive allergies
- open wounds
- skin abrasions
- inflamed or infected areas on your tummy

Are there any alternatives?

Your doctor may recommend alternative investigations depending on your symptoms, including:

- endoscopy (gastroscopy)
- gastric emptying studies
- radiological imaging tests
- capsule investigations

Your specialist will discuss the most appropriate test for you.

Do I need to prepare for the test?

Your stomach must be empty before the test.

You must not eat or drink anything for at least 6 hours before your appointment, including:

- water
- tea
- coffee
- gum
- sweets
- any other drinks or food

You also need to

- avoid applying moisturiser, body lotion, body oils, self-tanning products, or makeup to your tummy
- remove any tummy piercings before coming to the hospital
- avoid tobacco and cannabis on the morning of the test

Do I need to stop taking my medicine?

Some medicine can alter stomach movement or electrical activity and may affect the results of Gastric Alimetry®.

Where clinically safe, medicines that significantly affect gastrointestinal motility should be stopped for 48 hours before the test.

These include:

- prokinetic or motility medicines, including domperidone, metoclopramide, prucalopride and erythromycin
- antispasmodic or strongly anticholinergic medicines, including Buscopan®
- opioid painkillers, including codeine, co-codamol, tramadol, morphine, oxycodone and buprenorphine
- sedative or tranquillising medicines that may significantly affect gastrointestinal function

Laxatives should not be taken on the day before or during the test.

GLP-1 medicines such as semaglutide or tirzepatide can also affect stomach function. Please discuss these with your clinical team, as the appropriate period for stopping them depends on the individual medicine and dosing schedule.

Do not stop essential medicine, or abruptly stop long-term opioids or sedative medicine, without discussing this with your clinical team. Other regular medicine can usually be taken as normal with a small sip of water.

What will I need on the day of the test?

- Wear loose-fitting clothing.
- Wear loose tops and bottoms.
- Avoid wired bras.
- Bring a list of your medicines.
- Bring reading glasses if needed.
- Bring entertainment such as a book, tablet or laptop.

Please note that electronic devices must not rest directly on the tummy electrodes during the study.

If you have significant tummy hair, some shaving may be needed before applying the electrodes. You may prefer to shave the area at home before your appointment.

Things to remember

- Your appointment time is the time you are expected to arrive.
- The test lasts approximately 5 hours.
- You will remain in a reclined position for most of the test.
- You may rest during the study but should not sleep.
- Please allow enough time for your visit.
- Bring something to occupy your time during the test.

What happens when I arrive for my test?

A member of staff will confirm your details and review your medical history and medicines.

The clinician will explain the procedure and answer any questions you may have.

Consent

Your verbal consent will be obtained before the Gastric Alimetry® test begins. A member of staff will explain the procedure, including its benefits, risks and any alternatives, and answer any questions you may have.

If you are unsure about any aspect of the test, please ask a member of staff for further clarification before giving your consent. Written consent is not needed for this test.

What happens during the test?

The skin of your tummy will be prepared, and the adhesive electrodes will be placed on your tummy.

The study involves:

- a fasting recording period
- eating a standard test meal
- ongoing recording after the meal while you remain reclined

You may be asked to record any symptoms you experience during the test.

How long does the test take?

The Gastric Alimetry® test typically takes approximately 5 hours to complete.

What happens after the test?

When recording is complete, the electrodes will be removed.

You can usually leave the department immediately after the study and return to your normal daily activities unless advised otherwise.

When will I get my results?

The data collected during the study needs specialist analysis.

Your results will be reviewed by your clinical team and discussed with you at a follow-up appointment or communicated by your specialist.

Who can I contact with queries and concerns?

If you have any questions, such as what to do about medicine, before or after your procedure, contact the Endoscopy Pre-assessment Clinic, Monday to Sunday, 9am to 5pm:

- Endoscopy Pre-assessment Clinic, tel: 020 3299 2775

If you want to change your appointment or need further information, contact the Endoscopy Unit Reception, Monday to Sunday, 9am to 5pm:

- Endoscopy Unit Reception, tel: 020 3299 7874

Out of the hours above, for urgent worries or queries, you may call NHS Direct on 111 or go to your nearest Emergency (A&E) Department and take a copy of your report with you.

The Endoscopy Department is working hard to reduce the impact of its service on the environment, to find out more please see www.kch.nhs.uk/services/services-a- to-z/endoscopy/

MyChart

Our MyChart app and website lets you securely access parts of your health record with us, giving you more control over your care. To sign up or for help, call us on **020 3299 4618** or email **kings.mychart@nhs.net**. To find out more visit **www.kch.nhs.uk/mychart**.

Sharing your information

King’s College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust has partnered with Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust through the King’s Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre. We are working together to give our patients the best possible care, so you might find we invite you for appointments at Guy's or St Thomas' hospitals. King’s College Hospital and Guy’s and St Thomas’ NHS Foundation Trusts share an electronic patient record system, which means information about your health record can be accessed safely and securely by health and care staff at both Trusts. For more information visit www.kch.nhs.uk.

Care provided by students

We provide clinical training where our students get practical experience by treating patients. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you do not want students to be involved in your care. Your treatment will not be affected by your decision.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. They can also pass on praise or thanks to our teams.

Tel: **020 3299 4618**
Email: **kings.pals@nhs.net**

If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact our Interpreting and Accessible Communication Support on 020 3299 4618 or email kings.access@nhs.net

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