



GUIDE



Gastro-Esophageal Transit/Aspiration Study



The Ottawa Hospital | L'Hôpital
d'Ottawa



Disclaimer

This is general information developed by The Ottawa Hospital. It is not intended to replace the advice of a qualified health-care provider. Please consult your health-care provider who will be able to determine the appropriateness of the information for your specific situation.

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Your physician has requested an examination called a “Gastro-Esophageal Transit/Aspiration Study”.

What is a Gastro-Esophageal Transit/Aspiration study?

This is a simple and painless way of taking pictures of your ability to swallow.

Do I need to prepare for the scan?

You are required to fast for two hours prior to starting this test. Depending on the information that your physician is looking for, this test can take most of the day to complete.

What is involved?

A technologist will ask you to lie on an imaging table. You will then be asked to drink some water mixed with a small amount of radioactivity. You will experience no reactions to this drink. The technologist will take several pictures of the swallowing process. The camera does not produce radiation; it simply picks up signals (gamma rays) from the radioactive tracers which you received.

Once this first part of the test is complete, you will be given some orange juice with a small amount of radioactivity mixed in to drink. Again the technologist will take several pictures of the swallowing process. In some cases, it may be necessary to take additional pictures at various intervals throughout the day. In some cases, it may be necessary to take additional pictures the next day to determine if some of the orange juice is passing back into your throat and lungs.

Will it hurt?

This procedure is painless.

Is the radiation dangerous?

The amount of radioactivity used for this test is quite small and will disappear by itself soon after the scan is finished. Most of the radioactivity disappears within one day and any remaining traces disappear within one week.

Do I need to do anything after the scan?

No special precautions are needed after the scan. If you are travelling across any borders in the seven days after your scan, please ask us for further advice. Ports and airports have very sensitive radiation detectors which may pick up tiny amounts of radioactivity remaining after your scan. We will give you a letter that you can show to customs officials at ports or airports.

What happens to the results of the scan?

Once your procedure has been completed, a specially trained technologist will process your images. A Nuclear Medicine specialist will then review this analysis and create a report. This report is then sent to the doctor who asked us to do the study.

Is there anything I should tell the staff before the scan?

Yes, if you are pregnant or think you may be pregnant, please telephone us to let us know. Also, please telephone us if you are breastfeeding.

What if I have more questions?

We want your visit to be as pleasant as possible. If you have any questions, please ask the staff in the nuclear medicine department. You can telephone before your test day, or ask before the scan starts. **Our telephone number is 613-761-4831, ext. 8.**

Notes