

Information for Consumers - Ultrasound (Endoscopic Rectal)

This article tells you about the benefits and the risks, what happens before, during and after having an endoscopic rectal ultrasound.

What is an endoscopic rectal ultrasound?

Endoscopic rectal ultrasound is used to look inside your rectum. A flexible tube (endoscope), with an ultrasound tip on it is passed into your rectum. The ultrasound tip, which is connected to a computer by the tube, uses soundwaves to make pictures of the inside of your rectum.

Endoscopic rectal ultrasound can be used to look at:

- Cancer in the rectum
- Polyps in the rectum

Please note: endoscopic rectal ultrasound is different to a colonoscopy.

Benefits of endoscopic rectal ultrasound

- Can show cancer at an early stage
- Can show if cancer has spread and how far (staging of cancer)
- Does not use radiation

Risks of endoscopic rectal ultrasound

Your doctor knows the risks of having an endoscopic rectal ultrasound. Your doctor will consider the risks before recommending you to have an endoscopic rectal ultrasound. Possible risks are:

- Bleeding
- Your rectum or colon may be hurt or punctured (this is very rare)

Preparation

- Bring your referral letter or request form and all x-rays taken in the last 2 years with you
- Leave the x-rays with the radiology staff as the doctor may need to look at them. The radiology staff will tell you when these are ready to be picked up
- Leave all jewellery and valuables at home

Just before the endoscopic rectal ultrasound

- You may be given an enema to help clear your rectum of faeces
- You may be given a gown to wear
- You may be asked to remove any metal objects

Important to tell your doctor before the endoscopic rectal ultrasound



- If you are or may be pregnant
- If you are on any blood thinning medication (warfarin, regular aspirin)

What happens during an endoscopic rectal ultrasound?

You will be asked to lie on a table on your side. A flexible tube with an ultrasound tip will be passed into your rectum. You may be asked to change position so that the doctor can see inside your rectum clearly. The doctor will look at the pictures of inside your rectum on a screen, while the tube is being slowly pulled back out. (This procedure may feel a little bit uncomfortable however sedation is not usually needed)

The doctor may need to take a sample from inside your rectum. Sedation is not normally required.

The endoscopic rectal ultrasound usually takes about 30 minutes to one hour including time taken to get ready.

Consent

You have the right to refuse an examination and may do so if you wish. You may be asked to fill in a consent form.

When will I get the results?

The amount of time it takes for you to get your results will differ depending on where you get your scans done. The radiology doctor will look at the pictures and write a report. The pictures may be on films or on a CD.

Ask whether you should wait to take the pictures and report with you, or whether they will be sent to your doctor.

Your doctor will need to discuss the report with you. You will need to make an appointment to do this.

After the endoscopic rectal ultrasound

You will be able to go soon after the endoscopic rectal ultrasound has finished and can continue with normal activities.

If you had sedation

- you must not drive a car or take public transport
- you must have someone with you for 24 hours afterwards

Costs

For an Australian patient in a Public Hospital in Western Australia

- Public patient - no cost to you unless advised otherwise
- Private patient - costs can be claimed through Medicare and your health insurance provider

For a patient in a Private Hospital or Private Imaging Site in Western Australia or a patient outside Western



Australia

- Ask your doctor or the staff where you are having your test done what the cost will be

Further information

For more detailed information, please access InsideRadiology at: www.insideradiology.com.au

This is a resource produced especially for consumers by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists: www.ranzcr.edu.au

A guide to gathering information that you may need for making informed decisions is published by the Consumers' Health Council of Australia at: <https://chf.org.au>

Or for other relevant information, access the Diagnostic Imaging Pathways website at:
<http://www.imagingpathways.health.wa.gov.au/index.php/consumer-info>

Or if you have questions or require any other information please contact your doctor or speak to the staff where you are going to have your procedure.

Consumer participation

This information has been reviewed by representatives from the following groups:

- Aboriginal people
- People with disabilities
- Seniors
- CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse)
- The Health Consumers' Council

Feedback

All feedback, comments and suggestions regarding consumer information at Diagnostic Imaging Pathways are welcome. Please direct them to the following email address: dipfeedback@health.wa.gov.au

Disclaimer

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