

## Procedure Risks



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Capsule retention has been reported in less than two percent of all small bowel capsule endoscopy procedures. Capsule retention is defined as having a capsule that remains in the digestive tract for more than two weeks.

Causes of retention cited in the literature include: NSAID strictures, Crohn's disease, small bowel tumors, intestinal adhesions, ulcerations, and radiation enteritis. Summaries in published literature identify the risk of retention for obscure bleeding to be 1.5%; for suspected Crohn's disease to be 1.4%; for known Crohn's disease the risk is higher at 5%; and for neoplastic lesions, the rate of retention is 2.1%; as compared to healthy volunteers (Cave et al, 2005; Liao et al, 2010). To verify passage of the capsule from the GI tract, an abdominal X-ray may be obtained at the discretion of the physician.

There is a rare risk of capsule aspiration while patients are attempting to swallow a PillCam capsule. There is also a low risk of skin irritation from the PillCam sensor array's sleeve adhesive or silicone exposure.

## Florida Digestive Specialists



### Capsule Endoscopy FAQ'S

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## Capsule Endoscopy



A capsule endoscopy is a diagnostic procedure used to view the inside of the GI tract – specifically the small intestine. Unlike traditional endoscopy procedures, a patient swallows a capsule that contains a tiny camera. The camera takes pictures as it travels through the digestive tract and transmits the images to a receiver worn on the outside of the body.

*Did you know...*

*that until recent years, the small intestine was one of the most difficult organs to diagnose and treat without a major operation? Thanks to the capsule endoscopy, many patients enjoy diagnostic testing that is minimally invasive and non-disruptive to their lifestyle. In most cases, a capsule endoscopy is a safe and appropriate procedure for anyone who is capable of swallowing the capsule .*

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

Why would my gastroenterologist recommend a capsule endoscopy?

A capsule endoscopy is useful in diagnosing disorders affecting the small intestine that are not perceptible using x-rays or other imaging scans. Your doctor may order a capsule endoscopy to aid in finding the source of unexplained symptoms, such as intestinal bleeding. You may also need capsule endoscopy to diagnose or monitor the treatment of conditions like:

- Inflammatory Bowel Disease
- Celiac Disease
- GERD
- Malabsorption
- Anemia and Intestinal Bleeding

### **What should I expect during a capsule endoscopy?**

You will swallow a vitamin-sized capsule to begin the endoscopy. An antenna will be placed on the outside of your abdomen to record photos. Once you swallow the capsule containing the camera, you will be allowed to go about your usual business. However, you may be instructed to avoid repetitious motions or any movements that may disrupt the camera's position within your body. Once the camera passes through the digestive tract – a process that can take several days in some people – the capsule can safely be flushed down the toilet and the external antenna returned to your GI doctor for evaluation.

### **Is a capsule endoscopy safe?**

This diagnostic test is safe for most people who are capable of swallowing a capsule. The camera travels through the body incident-free in most cases, and it does not harm household plumbing once it has been expelled. Most people pass the camera within several days, though an x-ray can easily pinpoint the location of a capsule endoscope that is still inside the body.