

# Gastroenterology appointments

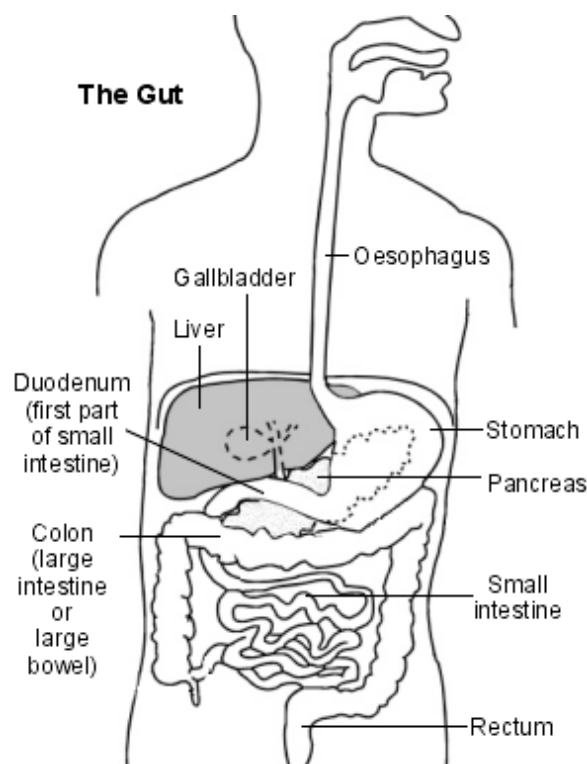
## Referral to gastroenterology

Gastroenterology is the medical speciality that investigates and treats problems with the gut (gastro-intestinal tract), including the oesophagus (gullet), stomach, small bowel, colon (large bowel), pancreas, liver and gallbladder.

Common reasons to be referred to the department are for the investigation of:

- A change in bowel habit to diarrhoea or constipation +/- rectal bleeding
- Persistent indigestion, difficulty swallowing or acid reflux
- Anaemia (a low blood count, which can be caused by bleeding from the gut)
- Abdominal pain
- Weight loss
- Abnormal liver tests or jaundice
- Inflammatory bowel disease
- Family history of bowel cancer or polyps

We work closely with the colorectal surgical team based in the department.



## What happens in the clinic?

The department, including the outpatient clinics and endoscopy department, are based in B57 on the second floor of zone B, in the Royal United hospital (RUH). Please **bring your current prescription** to clinic and endoscopy.

Most people are first referred by their GP for a clinic appointment to meet a consultant or nurse specialist, for assessment and a decision about investigations or treatment. As everyone is different the appointments can take a variable amount of time, so while we try to keep to the time allocated sometimes these run behind. As parking can be difficult, allow plenty of time to park, and let us know if you are late on **01225 824601**, to avoid delaying other peoples appointments. Our notice board will keep you informed of delays. Our nursing staff may weigh and measure you before the appointment. During the consultation you may be examined, a chaperone is always available on request.

Some people are referred directly for endoscopy of the upper gut (gastroscopy) or a limited examination of the lower gut (flexible sigmoidoscopy). If a procedure has been arranged, without a clinic assessment first, you will have received a booklet on the procedure in the post in advance, with details of how to prepare. Following a national alert, no-one is booked directly for a colonoscopy unless they have had one recently; this is so we can assess it is safe for you to have the bowel preparation and procedure, and discuss the procedure with you.

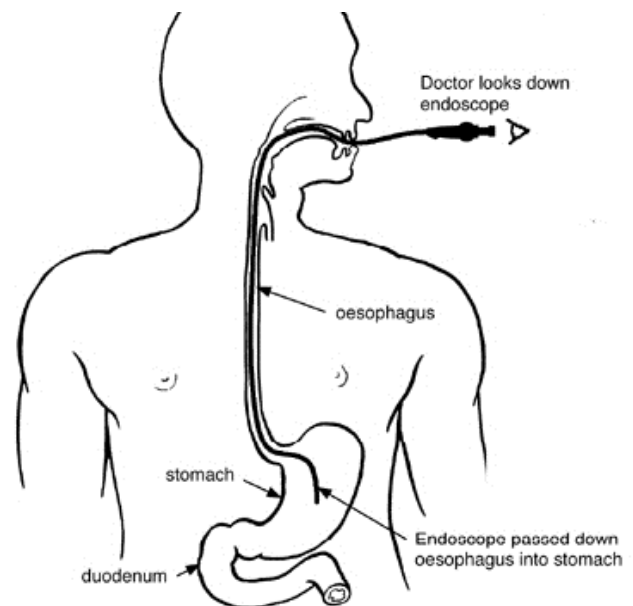
## Investigations of the gastrointestinal tract (gut)

There are many investigations that may be performed to investigate your symptoms. You may be sent for tests after your clinic appointment. The RUH **blood test department is B9** on the ground floor; it is open Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm; alternatively you can have your blood tests at your GP practice. You may also be given a sample pot to submit **urine or stool**; these can be handed in to your GP practice; don't forget to put all your details on the pot and form, including the date you collected the sample, and hand it in on the morning of the same day.

If you are sent for an xray after your clinic appointment the **xray department is B7** on the ground floor and is open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

All other scan appointments such as CT, MRI or ultrasound are sent in the post. Our radiology (xray) department have a website on which information is available about investigations such as ultrasound, a CT scan, xray or MRI scan. [www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/radiology/](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/radiology/)

**Endoscopy** of the upper (gastroscopy) and lower gut (flexible sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy), as well as investigations of the lungs (bronchoscopy) and the bile ducts (ERCP) are performed within the department.



**Endoscopy (Gastroscopy) is the examination of the upper gut (oesophagus, stomach and duodenum) using a flexible fibre-optic endoscope**

## How can we be contacted?

### Endoscopy

The endoscopy administrative team are on **01225 824069**, (Monday-Friday, 8am-4pm). If you have questions about the procedure please contact our endoscopy nursing team on **01225 821425** or **01225 821788**, (Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm) and ask to speak to a registered nurse.

### Non-emergency (elective) admissions / surgery

If you would like to find out about a hospital admission date please contact the clinical site team on **01225 825977**. The surgical waiting list coordinator is on **01225 824699**.

### Outpatient appointments

The clinic reception and administrative team are on **01225 824601** and can help reschedule follow up appointments. Your first gastroenterology clinic appointment is arranged via the team on **01225 821021**. The surgical clinic appointments team are on **01225 826253**. The secretaries can be contacted via switchboard on **01225 428331**.

### Radiology (xray) department

If you would like to find out about a CT appointment call **01225 825989**, for MRI appointments call **01225 824072**, or an ultrasound appointment call **01225 825529**.