

EUS Information

What is EUS?

Endoscopic ultrasound (EUS) is an endoscopic technique used to visualise the layers of the gastrointestinal tract and surrounding internal organs. Areas that can be seen and examined include the oesophagus, stomach, duodenum, liver, gallbladder, pancreas and lungs.

EUS uses a special type of instrument that is an endoscope (long flexible tube with a light and camera on the end) with a built-in ultrasound probe at the tip. Through the use of the ultrasound, the specialist can look at the individual layers of the wall of the gastrointestinal tract as well as outside the wall without having to do an operation.

Why is EUS Performed?

EUS is often organised after several other investigations have been performed (CT scan, MRI scan or gastroscopy) and demonstrate a lesion or lump that needs more detailed investigations to determine what exactly the lesion is and what can be done for treatment. EUS can be performed in patients with lesions suspicious for cancers. It can help determine the spread of the tumour/cancer (staging). In some patients it can be used to obtain a specimen/biopsy to determine the correct diagnosis.

How is EUS Performed?

EUS is typically performed in a tertiary hospital due to the expensive nature of the equipment and the highly technical nature of the procedure. The procedure is similar to that of a gastroscopy except longer (30-60 minutes). It is typically performed as a day procedure. Deep sedation or general anaesthesia is often used during the procedure. If biopsies are performed, antibiotics may be given to prevent the risk of infection.

What are the Risks of EUS?

Although complications can occur, they are rarely serious. A sore throat is the most common side effect, as is bloating following the procedure. Infection can uncommonly occur in certain situations and is prevented with antibiotics. The major but rare complication (<1/10000) with EUS is a tear in the wall of the gastrointestinal wall (perforation); this may require an operation.

What is the Preparation for EUS

You will need to fast for at least 6 hours prior to the procedure. Generally, you should take all your regular medications with a sip of water even in the morning of the procedure. If you are taking diabetic or blood thinning medication (eg. warfarin, clopidogrel, xarelto), please contact Victorian Gastroenterology (8677 7446) to discuss whether these should be ceased in the days before the procedure.

As the procedure is under sedation/anaesthesia, you will require a responsible adult to drive you home, and you should not stay alone that night.