

Visual guide to capsule sponge testing

NHS

East of England
Cancer Alliances 



You will be welcomed by one of our team, who will make sure all your details are correct.



You will have the chance to ask any questions about the test and talk through what is going to happen during the test.



The capsule is about the size of a vitamin pill and is attached to a strong thread.

First you swallow the capsule, then it dissolves in your stomach, releasing a small sponge.

The sponge is gently pulled and collects cells as it comes back up through your food pipe (oesophagus).

The sponge will then be sent away for testing.





1

When you are ready the test will begin. The capsule will be placed in your mouth using the applicator and you will be asked to swallow it. The applicator places the capsule at the back of your mouth to help you to swallow it.

Once you have swallowed the capsule you will need to sip some water to help the capsule to dissolve and release the sponge. The sponge is on a thread that is attached to the applicator.



2

You then need to wait for 7 minutes, while the capsule dissolves in your stomach to release the sponge.



3

Our team will bring the sponge back up by pulling on the thread. As it comes up through your food pipe (oesophagus) it collects cells for our team to test. This only takes a few seconds.



4

The sponge is put in a lab container, the thread removed, the container sealed, and sent to our laboratory for testing.



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