



Central West Specialists

Ear, Nose & Throat Specialist

ENDOSCOPY

Endoscopy means looking into the voice box or lower airways and sometimes looking into the oesophagus (gullet). This can usually be done as a day surgical procedure but if there is any concern of bleeding after this it is strongly recommended that you stay in hospital overnight. Once the first 24 hours have passed the risk has virtually gone.

The major risk of these procedures is to the teeth. Sometimes it is extremely difficult to get a view of the voice box or oesophagus and the teeth can be chipped or even broken completely. A strong guard is used to protect the teeth during this procedure so the risk of this is low.

The instruments to view these lower areas are various types of rigid tubes. They are very modern and they have good lights and they provide an excellent view in most cases. Damage however can occur to other structures. For example, the oesophagus is a strong muscular tube but it can be perforated. This is a very serious complication and will require further surgery. It is very rare however and I have never seen a case of it.

Endoscopies such as these are carried out mostly looking for tumors. Occasionally, the patient may have a chicken bone or some other problem caught in their throat. These bones can also perforate the oesophagus and it can be extremely dangerous. Removing them however, is usually is not any great problem and the person can mostly go home after a few hours of observation.

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