

Imaging of the gastrointestinal tract for suspected bleeding. Professor Alice Defarges

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Alicam capsule endoscopy unit.

Endoscopy is great to visualise the stomach, proximal duodenum and colon. (But you're missing the majority of the small intestine. The gi tract is about 5 times as long as the animal!)

Pro tip: Insufflation of the gi tract can temporarily stop the bleeding from active bleeding lesions.

If you suspect a **perforated ulcer** then **radiography** and repeated **AFAST** are the next steps.

In a non-perforated stable animal with evidence of chronic blood loss anaemia specialist ultrasound can rule out causes like neoplasia and foreign bodies, but **ultrasound is not sensitive in picking up mucosal lesions**, even in the hands of a specialist.

Next step: consider **capsule endoscopy**.

New technology (Alicam) has 360 degree panoramic high detail view of the gi wall.





Practicalities:

Administer like a normal capsule to a fasted animal.

No special equipment needed.

Smallest animal to swallow it has been 4.3kg. Around 7kg patient size - sensible minimum cut off.
Current camera size is not appropriate for cats.
CAN be used in horses.

Not always great for the stomach, depending on gastric transit time. May pass too quickly to film the entire stomach wall. Traditional endoscopy good for detailed stomach exam.

Contraindicated in gi obstruction and strictures.

Pro tip: can use traditional endoscopy to scope the stomach and then use the scope to drop Alicam into the small intestine.

Other uses other than suspected gi bleeding:

- Great to diagnose motility issues (probably under-diagnosed due to limited capacity to diagnose until now), because the camera keeps track of time during transit.
- Vascular malformations
- Lymphangiectasia
- Neoplasia
- Inflammatory conditions