Gastroenterology Associates of Texas, PA

Adult Gastroenterology, Hepatobiliary & Pancreatic Disorders
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Upper GI Endoscopy

Patient Education

What is Upper GI Endoscopy?

Upper GI endoscopy is a special exam of your upper gastrointestinal (GI) tract. If you are having symptoms of an upper GI problem, this procedure may be done to help find the cause. It can also help treat upper GI problems.

What is an Endoscope?

During endoscopy, a long, narrow, flexible tube called an endoscope is used. This instrument contains a strong light and a video camera. It shows images of your GI tract on a video screen.

Upper GI Anatomy

Upper GI endoscopy allows your doctor to look directly into the upper part of your GI tract. The esophagus, stomach, and duodenum (the first part of the small intestine) make up the upper GI tract.

What Upper GI Endoscopy Can Do

Upper GI endoscopy helps diagnose ulcers, gastritis, growths, causes of bleeding or pain, and cancer. It may detect the presence of *H. pylori*, a type of bacteria that causes ulcers. It is also used for taking a sample of tissue (biopsy). Foreign objects or growths can be removed, bleeding can be stopped, and narrowed areas (strictures) can be opened.

Getting Ready

Follow these and any other instructions you are given before your endoscopy. If you don't follow the doctor's instructions carefully, the test may need to be cancelled or repeated.

- **Do not eat or drink anything after midnight** the night before your exam. If your exam is in the afternoon, drink only clear liquids in the morning, and do not eat or drink anything for 6 hours before the exam.
- Bring your x-rays and any other test results you have.
- Because you will be sedated, arrange for an adult to drive you home after the exam.

What to Tell Your Healthcare Provider

Tell your healthcare provider before the exam if any of the following is true for you:

- You are allergic to any medication or anesthetic.
- You take any medication, especially aspirin, arthritis medication, or blood thinners.
- You have heart or lung problems.
- You are pregnant.

The Procedure

A doctor and a nurse perform the procedure. It takes about 15 minutes.

- You lie on the endoscopy table.
- Your throat may be numbed with a spray or gargle. You are given sedating (relaxing) medication through an intravenous (IV) line.
- You swallow the endoscope. This is thinner than most pieces of food you swallow. It will not affect your breathing. The medication helps keep you from gagging.
- Air is inserted to expand your GI tract. This air can make you burp.
- The endoscope carries images of your upper GI tract to a video screen. If you are awake, you may be able to look at the images. Prints of the video images can be taken and stored as a record of your exam.
- After the procedure is done, you rest for a time. An adult must drive you home.

After the Procedure

You may hear the results soon, sometimes the day of your endoscopy. Biopsy results may take a few days. Follow your doctor's instructions for what to do after the procedure.

WHEN TO CALL YOUR DOCTOR. Call if you have any of the following after the procedure: blood in your stool, fever, or pain in your abdomen.