

Upper Gastrointestinal Endoscopy Information Guide

Your doctor has determined that you should undergo a procedure called an **Upper Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (Gastroscopy)** on the following date to enable further evaluation of your condition:

APPOINTMENT DATE: / / **AT** **AM / PM**

This information guide has been prepared to help you understand the procedure. It includes answers to questions most frequently asked by patients. Please read it carefully. Please feel free to ask your doctor any additional questions before you undertake the procedure.

IMPORTANT

- You must organise a driver and someone to look after you post procedure. The sedatives used for this procedure will mean that you are **LEGALLY** under the influence of a mind altering drug for a period of 12 hours. It is best not to work on the day of the examination.
- You must cease all food and drink for 8 hours prior to your procedure.

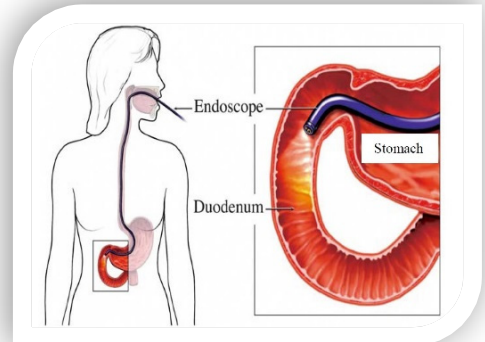
What is an upper gastrointestinal endoscopy?

Upper gastrointestinal endoscopy, also known as gastroscopy, is a procedure used to view the oesophagus, stomach and duodenum; which form the upper part of the digestive tract. The procedure is usually performed to evaluate symptoms of indigestion, upper abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting or difficulty swallowing. It is also the best test for finding the cause of bleeding from the upper gastrointestinal (GI) tract.

Endoscopy is used to treat conditions of the upper GI tract. Biopsies (samples of tissue) can be taken to determine sites of infection, to test the functioning of the small bowel and to diagnose abnormal tissue, including conditions such as coeliac disease and cancerous lesions. The doctor can pass small instruments through an endoscope to directly treat many abnormalities with little or no discomfort. For example, your doctor might stretch a narrowed area, remove polyps (usually benign growths) or treat bleeding.

How is an endoscopy performed?

Endoscopy is performed under sedation, as a day only procedure. You will need to fast to ensure the stomach is empty prior to the procedure. Once anaesthetic sedation is given, an endoscope is gently advanced through the mouth and then in turn through the oesophagus, stomach and duodenum, allowing your doctor to view the upper digestive tract. A small camera in the end of the scope transmits a video image to a monitor, allowing the doctor to carefully examine the lining of your upper GI tract. The doctor and medical staff monitor your vital signs during the procedure. The procedure itself takes about 10 to 15 minutes.



Depending on the findings, biopsies may be taken and sent to pathology. We also perform therapeutic endoscopy to directly treat bleeding, remove foreign bodies and dilate strictures, when needed.

What do I do prior to the procedure?

- Complete and return all pre-admission paperwork well prior to your scheduled appointment;
- You will need to fast and refrain from drinking. **HAVE NO FOOD OR DRINK FOR 8 HOURS** prior to your appointment time;
- Prescribed medications should be taken as per normal with a small sip of water up to 2 hours prior to your procedure. **DO NOT** take any medication within **2 HOURS** of arriving for your procedure;
- Arrive at the Centre dressed in comfortable, loose fitting clothing (e.g. shirt and pants or shirt and skirt etc.)

It is anticipated that you will be at the Southern Endoscopy Centre for approximately **2-3 hours**.

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What are the possible complications and associated risks?

Although complications can occur in any procedure, gastrointestinal endoscopy is usually simple and safe. The chance of complications depends on the exact type of procedure that is being performed and other factors including your general health. You may have a slightly sore throat after the procedure and there is a slightly increased risk of chest infection. Air may also be trapped in your stomach causing you to feel bloated. If a biopsy has been taken or treatment performed, there may be minor bleeding.

Very rarely, the stomach lining may be torn, and if this occurs you will be admitted to hospital for an operation to repair it. Reactions to the sedative are also possible, but again rare. In a few cases, if the endoscopy is not successfully completed it may need to be repeated.

Extremely rarely, individual patients may – inhale some fluid that may still be present in the stomach resulting in pneumonia; have a reaction to the sedation, or experience damage to their teeth or oesophagus at the time of the examination. If there is a suspicion of pneumonia or other complications after your procedure, the doctor may decide to transfer you to hospital for further care. If an ambulance is required, the associated fees will be payable by you or your health fund.

What happens after the endoscopy is performed?

You will be monitored in the recovery area until most of the effects of the sedation medication have worn off. Your throat might be a little sore, and you might feel bloated because of the air introduced into your stomach during the test. In most circumstances, your doctor will briefly inform you of your test results on the day of the procedure. A follow-up appointment may be made to discuss the test results more fully or you will be referred to your GP. The results of any biopsies or samples taken can take several days.

IMPORTANT - Because of the sedation given, it is very important that you do not drive a car, travel on public transport alone, operate machinery, sign legal documents, or drink alcohol on the same day after the test. You will be required to have a friend or relative take you home and stay with you. Full recovery is expected by the next day.

Following your discharge and in the unlikely event that experience any of the following symptoms in the hours or days after the procedure, you should contact our Centre or your GP's rooms immediately:

- Fever;
- Trouble swallowing;
- Increasing throat, chest or abdominal pain; or
- Other symptoms that cause you concern.

If you require any further information please contact the Centre or talk to the doctor on the day of your appointment.

Any special instructions (if any) are provided below:

Thank you for choosing the Southern Endoscopy Centre. If you have any further questions, comments or concerns please don't hesitate to contact the Centre on **8294 9355**.