

Upper Endoscopy at Digestive Healthcare Endoscopy Center

Instructions

What is an upper endoscopy?

An upper endoscopy is a test performed to evaluate symptoms of persistent upper abdominal pain, bleeding, nausea, vomiting or difficulty swallowing. During the procedure, a doctor examines the lining of your esophagus, stomach and the first part of your small intestine through a thin, flexible tube called an endoscope. If growths or other abnormalities are found during the procedure, the doctor may remove the abnormal tissue for further examination, or biopsy. An upper endoscopy may also be used to treat various conditions of the upper gastrointestinal (GI) tract, such as narrowing, abnormal growths or bleeding.

PRE-PROCEDURE CHECKLIST

If you have diabetes, ask your regular doctor for diet and medication restrictions. Do not take your oral diabetes medicine on the day of your procedure. If you take metformin, stop taking it the day before your colonoscopy. Also, please bring your Insulin and Insulin syringes with you to your procedure; we will check your blood sugar before and after the procedure.

If you take a medication to thin your blood (such as Coumadin, Plavix, Pradaxia or Lovenox) be sure to discuss this with the doctor performing your procedure. You must get your prescribing doctor's permission if you need to stop these medications.

If you currently are taking other prescription medications, you may continue to take all other medications as instructed by the prescribing physician.

If you are or may be pregnant, please discuss the risks and benefits of this procedure with your doctor.

You MUST arrange for a ride for the day of your exam. If you fail to arrange transportation with a responsible adult, your procedure will need to be cancelled and rescheduled. Your driver must check in with you and stay in our office the entire time that you are there. We cannot start your procedure if you do not have a driver present. In addition to this, you may not take a taxi or ride the bus by yourself. This is for your safety.

If you must cancel or reschedule your appointment, please call 404-355-3200 at least three days prior to your procedure to avoid a late cancellation fee of \$150.00.

If you have any special needs, such as a pacemaker, internal defibrillator, latex allergy, need for an interpreter, or if you are allergic to eggs, nuts or soy, please contact our office immediately. Your procedure may need to be rescheduled.

STOP AND READ:

- **If you do not follow these instructions your procedure may be delayed or cancelled.**

- **Please note that you cannot have any solid foods after midnight the night before your procedure. This includes gum, mints, ice chips and cigarettes.**
- **You may have clear liquids up to two and a half hours before your procedure.**
- **You may take your medicines with clear liquids.**
- **You cannot have anything in your mouth (gum, mint, cough drop, ice chips etc.) two and a half hours before your procedure.**

PREPARATION

To ensure a successful exam, please follow all instructions carefully. Failure to accurately and completely prepare for your exam may result in the need for an additional procedure and both procedures will be billed to your insurance.

The day before your exam:

- Stop eating solid foods at midnight.
- Clear liquids are okay to drink (examples: water, Gatorade, clear broth, black coffee and apple juice).
- Do not drink red liquids or alcoholic beverages.

The day of your exam:

- Pre-menopausal women will be asked to give a urine sample for a pregnancy test.
- You may take your usual medications (exceptions noted above) with up to 4 oz. of water at least 2.5 hours prior to your procedure. Be sure to wear comfortable clothes and shoes that will remain on your feet (preferably tennis shoes) to your procedure. Please do NOT wear flip flops, sandals, or backless shoes.
- Please remove ALL jewelry including earrings, rings, bracelets, anklets, necklaces, and watches prior to the procedure, and be sure to leave any and all valuables at home. DHEC will not be responsible for any lost valuables (including eyeglasses and dentures).
- Plan to spend up to two hours at the endoscopy center the day of your procedure. The exam itself takes about 25 minutes to complete.

Before the exam:

- You will change into a gown and robe.
- Your medical history will be reviewed with you and you will be given a consent form to sign.
- A nurse will insert an intravenous (IV) line into your hand or arm.

During the exam:

- Medicine will be given through the IV line to sedate you.
- Your heart rate and oxygen levels will be monitored. If your blood pressure is low, you may be given fluids through the IV line.
- The doctor will insert a flexible, hollow tube - called an endoscope - into your mouth and will advance it slowly through the esophagus, stomach and duodenum (the first part of your small intestine).
- If you have difficulty swallowing, and the doctor finds a narrowing in your esophagus, it may be possible for the area to be expanded during the exam.
- If abnormal tissue is found, the doctor may remove it through the endoscope for closer examination, or biopsy. Tissue removal is painless.

What happens after the exam?

- The doctor will talk with you about the initial results of your exam.
- The doctor will prepare a full report for the physician who referred you for the upper endoscopy.
- You may feel bloated after the procedure. This is normal.
- Your throat may feel sore for a short time.
- Medication given during the exam will prohibit you from driving for the rest of the day.
- Following the exam, you may resume your normal diet. Avoid alcohol until the next day.
- You may resume your regular activities the day after the procedure.
- A nurse will provide you with complete discharge instructions before you leave the endoscopy center. Be sure to ask the nurse for specific instructions if you take blood thinners such as aspirin, Coumadin or Plavix.
- Any tissue samples removed during the exam will be sent to a lab for evaluation. It may take 5-7 working days for you to be notified of the results.

Are there possible complications from an upper endoscopy?

Although serious complications are rare, any medical procedure has the potential for risks. A nurse will review all potential warning signs with you before you leave the endoscopy center. Risks include:

- Perforation, or a tear, of the lining of the stomach or esophagus.
- Bleeding from the biopsy site if tissue was removed.
- Reaction to medications used during the procedure.

Additional information:

DIGESTIVE HEALTHCARE ENDOSCOPY LAB is located at 95 Collier Road NW, Suite 4075. Enter the Piedmont Hospital complex at the Collier Road entrance. Park in the “South” parking deck. Take the elevator to the “Orange Level”. Cross over the glassed in covered bridge. You are now in the 95 building. You do not have to check in at the hospital. Go up to the 4th floor and look for Suite 4075. You and your driver may sign in at the window. If someone is sitting at the window, let them know you have arrived.

- Bring a list of all of your current medications, including any allergy or over-the-counter medications.
- Bring a photo ID as well as up-to-date insurance information, such as your insurance card and any referral forms that might be required by your payer.
- Co-pays are required on the day of your appointment. If you have any questions about pre-certification, please call our business office at 404-603-3543.
- If your insurance does not cover this procedure, for example you are a self-paying patient or you have been notified by our office that you owe a copay or coinsurance, please bring a credit card (Visa, MasterCard and AMEX), check or cash.
- You may receive several statements from this procedure; your physician’s fee, a facility fee for the Endoscopy Center (supplies and nursing care), a statement for anesthesia (Propofol) and for pathology if tissue is removed during the procedure.