

Procedures/Diagnostic Tests

Gastroscopy (upper endoscopy)

You are scheduled for gastroscopy (sometimes called upper endoscopy). It is a diagnostic procedure that gives information about your health problem. It is done with a flexible, lighted instrument that enables your doctor to see your esophagus (swallowing tube), stomach, and duodenum (small intestine).

Preparation

- Do not eat or drink anything after midnight on the day of the procedure.
- You will be asked to wear a hospital gown.
- Remove dentures, contact lenses, or glasses.
- Please empty your bladder before the procedure.

Procedure

- The procedure is usually done in the endoscopy suite. Sometimes, it is done in your room.
- After your vital signs are taken, an I.V. (intravenous) line will be placed in your arm. This allows your doctor to give medications to relax you during the procedure.
- A nurse or doctor will put a topical anesthetic on the back of your throat. This may taste bitter and make your tongue or throat feel swollen. You will be given I.V. medication to help you relax.
- You will be asked to lie on your left side.
- The doctor will pass the flexible instrument into your mouth, down your esophagus, and into your stomach and duodenum. You may feel abdominal discomfort. Try to relax and breathe slowly and deeply.
- If necessary, small pieces of tissue (biopsy) will be taken through this instrument. This will not hurt.
- The procedure may last 30 minutes.

After the procedure

Do not eat or drink for at least 1 hour after the procedure, otherwise you might choke. Start off with water first, then try drinking other liquids. If you can swallow easily, you may eat.

When the anesthetic wears off, your throat may feel sore. You may also feel drowsy from the medications given during the procedure, so you should sit up slowly. If you are an outpatient, please arrange for someone to take you home.

Your stool may be black and have small blood clots. Report any unusual blood in your stool to your doctor. If you have a great deal of pain, difficulty breathing, or spit up blood, alert your doctor or nurse immediately.

If you have questions about the procedure, please ask. Your nurse and doctor are ready to assist you at all times.

Special instructions

This information is prepared specifically for persons taking part in clinical research at the National Institutes of Health Clinical Center and may not apply to patients elsewhere. If you have questions about the information presented here, talk to a member of your health care team.

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