

What is an upper endoscopy?

During an upper endoscopy, or esophagogastroduodenoscopy (EGD), your health care provider looks at the upper digestive system using a tiny camera on the end of a long, thin and flexible tube (endoscope).

When to get an upper endoscopy

An upper endoscopy can diagnose and treat upper gastrointestinal (GI) tract symptoms. An EGD can detect infections, tumors, ulcers and inflammation.

You may need an EGD if you have:

- difficulty swallowing (dysphagia)
- persistent stomach or chest pain
- anemia
- persistent heartburn and acid reflux
- bleeding in the upper digestive tract
- unexplained weight loss
- nausea
- vomiting
- food or other objects stuck in your GI tract.

Before your upper endoscopy

Learn more about [what to expect before, during and after your upper endoscopy procedure](#).

Tell your health care provider if you:

- have allergies to latex or any medicines, including Novocaine®
- are pregnant
- have heart or lung problems

- take medicines for seizure disorders, blood pressure, or heart or breathing problems. Take medicine as usual on the day of your exam.
- if you use an inhaler for breathing problems like asthma (use it on schedule before your endoscopy procedure).
- take insulin, diabetes pills or Prednisone® (Your health care provider may want to change your dosages.)

Ask your health care provider if and when you should stop certain medicines before the EGD. It's common to stop taking blood-thinning medications before your procedure.

Arrange for someone to drive you home after the exam. You may take sedative medicine that will make you sleepy.

You can eat regular foods up to eight hours before your scheduled arrival time.

Alcohol and tobacco use

Do not drink any alcohol, smoke, vape, use chewing tobacco or use any tobacco products up to 24 hours before your scheduled arrival time.

During your endoscopy procedure

As you prepare for your upper endoscopy:

- You will lie on your left side on the exam table.
- Your health care provider will spray your throat with numbing medicine.
- You may get sedative medicine through an intravenous (IV) line to help you relax or put you to sleep. The medicine and tube will not affect your breathing.
- We will monitor your pulse, blood pressure and oxygen during the procedure.

While your health care provider gently eases the endoscope down your throat:

- A tiny camera and light at the end of the endoscope sends images to a screen monitored by your health care provider. He or she will look for abnormalities in your upper digestive tract.
- Your provider may use gentle air pressure to inflate your digestive tract. The air can improve visibility and make room for any surgical tools during your upper endoscopy procedure if needed.
- Your health care provider may use small surgical tools through the endoscope. He or she may collect a tissue sample (biopsy) or remove abnormal or cancerous growths (polyps). Your tissue will be sent to a lab. Your provider can also use tools to treat a bleeding ulcer or remove anything stuck in the upper GI tract.

Good to know

- The exam and biopsies are not painful, but you may feel discomfort when swallowing the tube. You will take medicine to keep you from gagging.
- The tube and medicine do not interfere with your breathing. The endoscope will send pictures of your esophagus, stomach and duodenum to a video screen.
- Your provider will slowly take the endoscope out of your mouth at the end of your procedure. Most endoscopies last 15 to 30 minutes.

After your upper endoscopy

We will:

- talk with you about the results of the exam
- monitor you for about 30 minutes after the exam
- remove your IV

You may have a sore throat for a couple of days. Use ice chips or throat lozenges for relief. You will need a driver to drive you home and stay with you for 12 hours.

For 24 hours:

- Do not drive or use any machinery.
- Do not make important decisions.
- Do not drink alcohol. It's also important not to drink alcohol if you take prescription pain medicine.

Contact your provider if you have any questions or concerns after your EGD.

Endoscopy results

When you get EGD results depends on your reason for the procedure and what your health care provider finds. If you have small tissue samples removed (biopsy), we will share the results within two weeks of your exam.

Health insurance coverage and cost

Contact your health insurance provider about medical coverage and [get a price estimate](#) before scheduling an upper endoscopy. You will pay any deductible amounts and charges your policy doesn't cover.