

Some Answers

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EGD

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(717) 763-0430

[www.pagiconsultants.com](http://www.pagiconsultants.com)

## What is an EGD?

An endoscope is a long flexible tube that is thinner than most food you swallow. It is passed through the mouth, into the upper digestive tract and allows the physician to examine the lining of the esophagus, stomach and duodenum (the first portion of the small intestine).

If the doctor sees an abnormal area, he can pass an instrument through a channel in the endoscope and take a small piece of tissue (a biopsy) for examination in the laboratory. There is no pain associated with a biopsy. Biopsies are taken for many reasons and do not necessarily imply cancer.

Other instruments can also be passed through the endoscope without causing discomfort, including a small brush to wipe cells from a suspicious area for examination in the laboratory and a wire loop or snare to remove polyps (abnormal, usually benign, growths of tissue).

## What preparation is required?

For the best possible examination, the stomach must be completely empty, so you should have nothing to eat or drink, including water, gum, candy or tobacco after midnight the day of the examination. Be sure to let the doctor know if you are allergic to any drugs.

A responsible adult must accompany you to the examination because you will be given medication to help you relax. The medication will make you sleepy, so you will need someone to take you home. You will not be allowed to drive after the procedure. Even though you may not feel tired, your judgment and reflexes may not be normal. You may not drive or operate machinery until the next morning after a full night of sleep. Most patients can resume their usual activities by the next day.

## What should you expect during the procedure?

You will be given medication through an IV to make you relaxed and sleepy. While you are in a comfortable position, the endoscope is inserted through the mouth, and each part of the esophagus, stomach and duodenum is examined and visualized by your physician.

The procedure is extremely well tolerated with little or no discomfort.

The tube will not interfere with your breathing. Gagging is prevented by the medication.

## What happens after the EGD?

You will be kept in the recovery area until most of the effects of the medication have worn off. Your throat may be a little sore for several hours and you may feel bloated after the procedure because of the air that was introduced during the procedure. You will be able to resume your diet after the EGD unless you are otherwise instructed.

## Should I take my medications before the procedure?

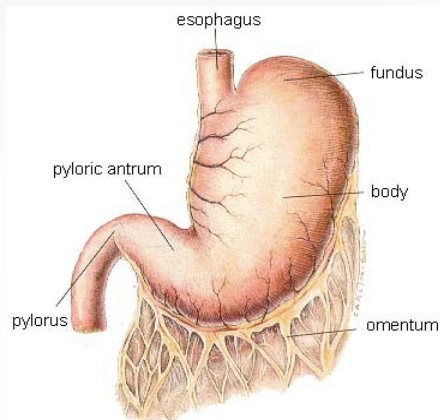
If you take any prescription medications, please speak to the nurse several days in advance of the procedure about taking them the morning of the procedure. Diabetic medications may need to be adjusted and most heart medications should be taken the morning of the procedure. If you take blood thinners please be sure to notify the office several days before your procedure since these may have to be stopped.

## Are there any complications from an EGD?

Although complications can occur, they are rare when performed by physicians who have been specially trained.

Bleeding can occur at a biopsy site or where a polyp was removed, but it's usually minimal and rarely requires follow-up.

Perforation (a hole or tear in the gastrointestinal tract lining) may require surgery but this is a very uncommon complication.



Localized irritation of the vein may occur at the site of the IV.

Other risks include drug reactions and complications from unrelated disease such as heart attack or stroke.

Although complications after EGD are very uncommon, it's important to recognize early signs of possible complications. Contact your doctor immediately if you have a fever after the test or if you notice trouble swallowing or increasing throat, chest or abdominal pain, or bleeding, including black stools. Note that bleeding can occur several days after the procedure.

## Why is an EGD necessary?

Many problems of the upper digestive tract cannot be diagnosed by X-ray. EGD may be helpful in the diagnosis of inflammation of the esophagus, stomach and duodenum (esophagitis, gastritis, duodenitis), and to identify the site of upper gastrointestinal bleeding.

EGD is more accurate than X-ray in detecting gastric (stomach) and duodenal ulcers, especially when there is bleeding. EGD may detect early cancers too small to be seen by X-ray and can confirm the diagnosis by biopsies and brushings.

EGD may also be needed for treatment, such as, stretching narrowed areas of the esophagus or for removal of polyps or

swallowed objects. Safe and effective endoscopic control of bleeding can drastically reduce the need for transfusions and surgery in patients with bleeding.

An EGD is an extremely safe and effective procedure that is very well tolerated and is invaluable in the diagnosis and proper management of disorders of the upper intestinal tract. The decision to perform this procedure was based on medical assessment of your particular problem.

## Your EGD is scheduled on:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Please arrive \_\_\_\_\_ minutes prior to the scheduled time at:

\_\_\_\_\_ Digestive Disease Institute  
899 Poplar Church Road  
Camp Hill, PA

\_\_\_\_\_ Holy Spirit Hospital—outpatient  
North 21st Street  
Camp Hill, PA

\_\_\_\_\_ Pinnacle Health—Harrisburg outpatient  
111 S. Front Street  
Harrisburg, PA