Getting Ready for Upper Gastrointestinal Endoscopy

Your doctor wants you to have an upper gastrointestinal endoscopy (EGD). This handout will tell you about the test and how to prepare for it.

What is an upper gastrointestinal (GI) endoscopy?
This test looks at your esophagus (food tube), stomach and the upper part of the small intestine. A doctor will pass a viewing tube through your mouth into the stomach. This test will help find the cause of abdominal pain, heartburn, and trouble with swallowing or bleeding. An EGD is better at finding many problems in the upper GI tract than an X-ray.

During the test the doctor can also take a small piece of tissue (a biopsy) to send to the lab if we need to look at an area more closely. Doctors take biopsies for many reasons and you will not be able to feel this part of the test.

Read 1 Week Before Your Test!
We may cancel your test if you do not follow the instructions.

Getting Ready
You may need to stop certain medicines before your test.

Stop these medicines:
- No prasugrel (Effient®) for 7 days.
- No warfarin (Coumadin®) for 5 days.
- No clopidogrel (Plavix®) for 5 days.
- No dabigatran (Pradaxa®) for 2 days.
- No ticagrelor (Brilinta®) for 2 days.
- No rivaroxaban (Xarelto®) for 2 days.
- No apixaban (Eliquis®) for 2 days.

Before starting or stopping any medicine please talk with your doctor who prescribes the medicine. Your doctor will tell you how to safely stop this medicine. Please contact us if you have other questions.

You will need to adjust diabetic medicines (oral and insulin) for the time you’re not eating as normal. Please discuss this with your primary doctor.

You must have an adult to drive you home or your test will be cancelled. You may take a cab or bus home only if you have a responsible adult with you other than the driver.

Plan ahead. For your test, we will give you sedatives which can greatly affect your judgment. On the day of your test, you will not be able to drive or return to work.

Our staff will review your health history, prior surgeries, allergies, and medicines. Please bring this information with you.

If you use CPAP or BiPAP for sleep apnea, please bring it with you. We will need your machine in order to sedate you safely.

Day of the Endoscopy
No solid food, milk, or dairy products until after your test.

You may drink clear liquids until 4 hours before you arrive (i.e., water, apple juice, soda, Gatorade®). Avoid red liquids.

Do not take liquid antacids before your test.
Take your normal medicines with a small sip of clear liquid up to 1 hour before you arrive. Do not take medicines listed under “Getting Ready” section.

Follow the instructions in your cover letter. If you are running late, call us to let us know. If you are over 30 minutes late, we may have to reschedule. We do our best to stay on time.

Plan to be with us about 2 hours. We will need to be able to reach your driver in our waiting room or by phone.

The Endoscopy
A nurse will review your health history and place an IV. We use the IV to give you medicines which make you feel drowsy and relaxed. When you are comfortable, we will place the scope into your mouth and start the exam. The scope will not restrict your breathing and you should not have any pain. The test will take 15 – 30 minutes. You will then go to our recovery room for about 30 minutes. Your driver may sit with you there. Once you are awake, we will give you something to drink.

Your doctor will discuss the test results with you before you leave. You and the doctor who referred you will receive a copy of the report.

After the Test
You may have a mild sore throat. Salt-water gargles should help.

If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concerns.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person’s health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 11/2019. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#4330

For the rest of the day:
- Do not return to work.
- Do not drive.
- Do not use heavy machinery.
- Do not make any important decisions.
- Plan to rest.
- Do not drink alcohol.

You should be able to resume your normal diet and daily tasks the day after your test.

You may have some gas pains from the air used to distend your stomach. When you belch you will expel the air and relieve any gas pains.

How to Contact Us
GI Procedure Clinic
600 Highland Avenue
Madison, WI
(608) 263-8097 or (800) 323-8942

Digestive Health Center
750 University Row
Madison, WI
(608) 890-5010

Meriter Hospital
202 S. Park Street
Madison, WI
(608) 417-6389