

Upper Endoscopy (EGD)

What is it?

Upper GI Endoscopy, sometimes called EGD (esophagogastroduodenoscopy), is a visual examination of the upper intestinal tract using a lighted, flexible fiberoptic or video endoscope. The upper gastrointestinal tract begins with the mouth and continues with the esophagus (food tube) which carries food to the stomach. The J-shaped stomach secretes a potent acid and churns food into small particles. The food then enters the duodenum, or small bowel, where bile from the liver and digestive juices from the pancreas mixes with it to help the digestive process. This test is to view the esophagus, stomach and part of the small bowel, using an endoscope. Biopsies may be taken and polyps can be removed using forceps along with this scope.

Reason for the examination?

Upper GI Endoscopy is performed to identify and/or correct a problem in the esophagus, stomach or duodenum. The procedure provides significant information upon which specific treatment can be given.

Some of the common reasons are:

- Ulcers – which can develop in the esophagus, stomach, or duodenum
- Tumors of the stomach or esophagus
- Difficulty in swallowing
- Upper abdominal pain or indigestion
- Intestinal bleeding – hidden or massive bleeding can occur for various reasons
- Esophagitis and heartburn – chronic inflammation of the esophagus due to reflux of stomach acid and digestive juices
- Gastritis – inflammation of the lining of the stomach

Where is it performed?

Upper GI Endoscopy is usually performed on an outpatient basis. This test can be done either at EEC or SPU. Patients who are high-risk or are over 280 pounds should only be scheduled at SPU. They are better equipped to handle these types of cases.

The throat is often anesthetized by a spray or liquid. IV sedation is usually given to relax the patient, deaden the gag reflex and cause short-term amnesia. They **must** arrange for someone to drive them home. Public transportation is not acceptable. For some individuals who can relax on their own and whose gagging can be controlled, the exam can be done without IV medication.

Preparation

Patients should have liquids only on the day of the procedure up to four (4) hours prior to the procedure.