

What is a Gastroscopy?

Patient Information
www.interiorhealth.ca

Gastroscopy is a visual examination of the lining of your esophagus (food pipe), stomach and the first part of your intestine (duodenum). It is performed by using a thin, flexible fiber-optic instrument that is passed through the mouth and allows the doctor to see whether there is any damage to the lining of the esophagus or stomach and whether there are any ulcers in the stomach or duodenum.

The procedure is painless and is usually done under a light sedative as a day-case.

How is a gastroscopy performed?

After explaining the procedure, an intravenous needle will be inserted into a vein in your hand, where medications are given to make you sleepy and relaxed. When sedation is used, it is not a full anaesthetic and you will still be conscious and aware. The doctor may spray the back of the throat with a local anaesthetic, but not always. A plastic guard will be placed in your mouth to protect your teeth. While in a comfortable position on your left side, the doctor will gently

place the end of the instrument into your mouth and ask you to swallow it, which feels like swallowing a large piece of food.

The doctor may need to put some air into the stomach to perform the examination effectively and this can cause discomfort or even a need to belch. This is perfectly normal. It will not interfere with your breathing, nor cause any pain. Often biopsies or samples of tissue are taken from the lining of your stomach. They will be examined and may help in determining your treatment.

The doctor can closely examine the lining of the esophagus, stomach and duodenum to identify the cause of the symptoms. The mucous membrane of the stomach will be studied from the top to the bottom, to see if there is irritation, wounds, tumors or any abnormalities. It is precise and safe. The examination takes about 10 to 30 minutes.

Patients are often given a gastroscopic examination because of their indigestion

symptoms, which can usually be treated with medication.

How to prepare for a gastroscopy

This is very important and the success of the procedure depends on this preparation.

You are to check in at the reception/switchboard of the Golden Hospital at the arrival time given. You can expect to be at the hospital for about 3 to 4 hours in total on the day of your procedure and **you will require a ride home afterwards.**

Do not drive or operate machinery for 24 hours following the sedation, even if you feel OK, as you are considered legally impaired.

The night before your procedure, you are to have **nothing to eat or drink after midnight.**

Smoking and chewing gum are **not permitted.**

You are to continue to fast until after your procedure.

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Interior Health

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Healthlink BC

Dial 8-1-1

Talk to a Nurse 24 hours/day, 7 days/week
Pharmacist available between 5 p.m. - 9 a.m. daily
Dietitian between 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. - Monday to Friday
www.healthlinkbc.ca

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Endoscopy and your medications

Your physician must be aware of all the medications you are taking. Some may thin your blood and make it easier for you to bleed during or after the procedure.

Please bring a list of all the medications you are taking with you to the hospital on the day of the procedure.

Medications containing **ASA or aspirin should be stopped 1 week prior to the procedure**, however daily baby aspirin 81 mg is OK.

Anti-inflammatory medications should be stopped 48 hours prior to the procedure. These medications include: ibuprofen, Motrin[®], Advil[®], Celebrex[®], Arthrotec[®], Voltaren[®], Indocid[®], Naprosyn[®], Toradol[®], to name a few.

Many herbal medications have a blood thinning effect. It is recommended that you **stop all herbal medications 7 days before the procedure.**

IMPORTANT: If you are on stronger blood thinners, such as Coumadin[®] (warfarin), Fragmin[®], Plavix[®], please advise your

physician for instructions well in advance of the procedure.

Apart from these exceptions, you may take all your regularly scheduled medications, including on the morning of the procedure, with a little sip of water. If you are unsure, please contact your physician for instructions specific to your situation.