

- Sometimes the test cannot be finished because of technical problems.
- Painkillers and blood thinners can make you bleed more. Please do not take these drugs for a week after the test if a polyp was taken out or if a tissue sample was taken.

What are your questions? Please ask your doctor and/or nurse, or call your specialist.

We are here to help you.

Are there any risks with this test?

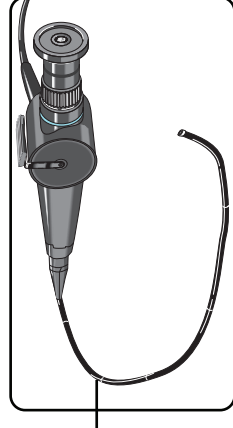
A gastroscopy is a minor procedure with very little risk when done by a trained professional. As with any test, there are some things you should know:

- There is about a 1 in 5,000 chance of having a tear (perforation) through the lining of the esophagus or stomach. Surgery may be needed to fix the tear.
- There is a 1 in 10,000 chance that bleeding may happen if a tissue sample was taken. This bleeding may stop on its own but may also need more treatment.
- There is a 1 in 1.8 million chance of getting an infection from the equipment used for the test. This has never been reported in Canada.
- Some patients may develop problems because of the sedatives or existing heart or lung diseases. Please tell your specialist if you've had any trouble with these issues in the past.
- Some patients may be sore where the IV was put in. Do not worry if there is a lump at the IV site, as this should go away on its own over a few weeks.

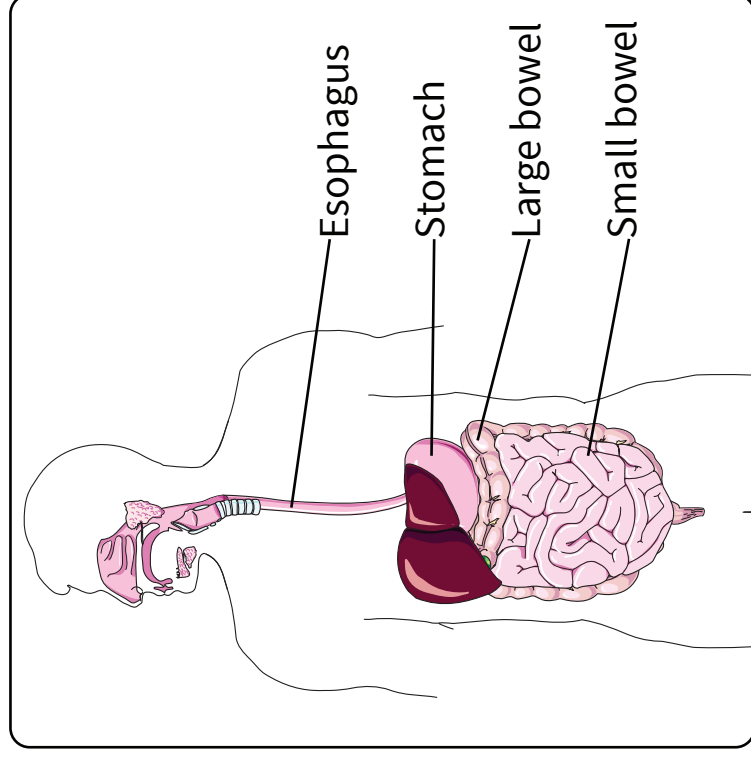
Gastroscopy: VG Site

What is a gastroscopy?

A gastroscopy is an exam of the esophagus (throat), stomach, and duodenum (the first part of the small bowel). The doctor uses a special tube (endoscope) with a small light and camera on one end that bends to look at the inside of your upper gastrointestinal tract.



Endoscope



If you will be getting sedation, you must have a responsible adult here with you during your test. They must take you home and stay with you overnight after your test. If this is not possible, call your specialist, as we may have to cancel your test.

How do I get ready for my gastroscopy?

It is **VERY** important that you get ready by doing these things:

- If your appointment is **before noon**, do not **eat or drink anything after midnight** before the test. This includes water. If you eat or drink anything after midnight, and your stomach is not empty, the exam will be less accurate as the doctor will not be able to see properly.
- If your test is **after noon**, you may have clear liquids up until 6 hours before the test. A glass of clear juice (such as apple juice) and **one** cup of tea or coffee **without** milk or cream is fine.
- You may wish to plan a day off work for the day of your test. Most people can go back to work the day after their test.
- Take all heart, blood pressure, or breathing medicine on the day of the test.

What do I need to know if I've had sedation?

- A responsible adult must take you home and care for you.
- They must stay at the hospital the whole time you are having your test.
- Do not walk or take the bus home. You may take a taxi **only** if you go with a responsible adult who can help you if needed.

For 24 hours after sedation:

- Do not drive a car or run any heavy machinery.
- Do not drink alcohol.
- Do not care for others.
- Do not sign any legal or important papers.

What happens after the test?

- The test should take about 10 minutes. After a 30-45 minute stay in the recovery room, you may go home. **If you had sedation, you need to go home with a responsible adult.**
- **Do not** eat or drink anything for an hour after the test. It may take this long for you to be able to gag again after getting the throat spray.
- Expect to feel mild belly cramping.

Call your doctor or go to the nearest Emergency Department if you have any of the following after leaving the hospital:

- > a lot of belly pain
- > bleeding
- > vomiting (throwing up)

- If you are diabetic and on medicine and/or insulin, talk with your doctor. You may need special instructions on taking these medicines before your test. Bring your blood testing supplies with you on the day of the test.
- Talk with the doctor if you are taking blood thinners, such as ASA (Aspirin®), Aspirin®-containing products, or warfarin.
- If you need antibiotics for tests or dental work, call your specialist before the test.
- Tell the doctor about any drug allergies you may have.
- Please bring the health questionnaire sent in the mail.
- Bring a **list of all your medicines** to the test.
- **Do not** wear any jewelry or bring any valuables. The hospital is not responsible for any lost items.
- Please do not use perfumed products such as hairspray or scented deodorant before your visit. NSHA has a scent-free policy.

If you need to cancel your test, please call your specialist at least 3 days (72 hours) before your test is scheduled. This will give us time to book another patient.

Where do I go on the day of my test?

The name of your specialist, and the date, time, and place of your test will be shared with you before the test. Parking is limited so be sure to allow plenty of time to park before your appointment.

You must register at the kiosk on the main floor in either the Dickson Building or Centennial Building (main entrance).

How is the test done?

- An intravenous (IV) may be started in your arm.
- We may give you medicine through your IV to help with any pain and help you relax.
- You will be asked to gargle or have your throat sprayed with a numbing mixture. After your throat is numb, you will not be able to gag for a short time. This will make it easier when the doctor puts the endoscope in place.
- The specialist will put the endoscope through your mouth, into your stomach and then into the duodenum.
- You may gag as the endoscope passes through your mouth. Passing the endoscope should be painless and will not change your breathing.
- The specialist will put air into your stomach through the endoscope. The air slightly fills your upper GI tract, and gives the doctor a clear look at the lining of your esophagus, stomach and duodenum. Adding the air may make you feel bloated or give you gas.
- The doctor may take a tissue sample or take out a polyp during the test. This will not hurt and is nothing to worry about.