Upper Endoscopy (EGD)

What is it?

Upper Endoscopy or EGD uses a flexible camera to evaluate the esophagus, stomach, and the first portion of the small bowel. This procedure is typically performed with medication to ensure you are drowsy and comfortable during the procedure. Most patients do not recall the procedure even being performed.

Why is the procedure performed?

There is a wide range of reason to perform an upper endoscopy. They include upper abdominal pain, heartburn, inflammation of the esophagus (esophagitis), bleeding from the stomach, difficult with swallowing (Dysphagia), vomiting, unexplained weight loss, ulcers, and cancer.

What do they do if they find an abnormality during my procedure?

There are a lot of procedures to deal with abnormalities that are found during an upper endoscopy. Your doctor may take biopsies to evaluate a mass or ulcers, or dilate a narrowing in your GI tract. Each patient is unique.

How do I prepare for an Upper Endoscopy?

You will not be able to eat or drink for 6-8 hours prior to your procedure. You should tell your doctor if you are allergic to any medications or anesthetics, which medications you are taking, if you are on any blood thinners like Coumadin or Plavix, if you have bleeding problems, if you have heart or lung problems, or treatment of the esophagus, stomach or upper intestinal tract with radiation. You should also let your doctor know if you are or think you are pregnant.

What happens after my Upper Endoscopy?

You will stay in a recovery room for about 30 minutes for observation. You may feel some cramping or a sensation of having gas, but this usually passes quickly. You will need to have a responsible adult drive you home, as it is unsafe to drive or operate machinery for about 8 hours after the procedure (due to the sedative medication given). You can resume your normal diet.

What are the Risks?

The risks are very low for upper endoscopy. There is a risk of perforation or a hole in you esophagus, stomach, or small bowel. There is a low risk of bleeding. Upper Endoscopy is a safe procedure performed frequently at The Ohio State University Medical Center.

This information is not intended to replace a visit with your physician. To make an appointment with one of our surgeons, please call 614-293-3230.