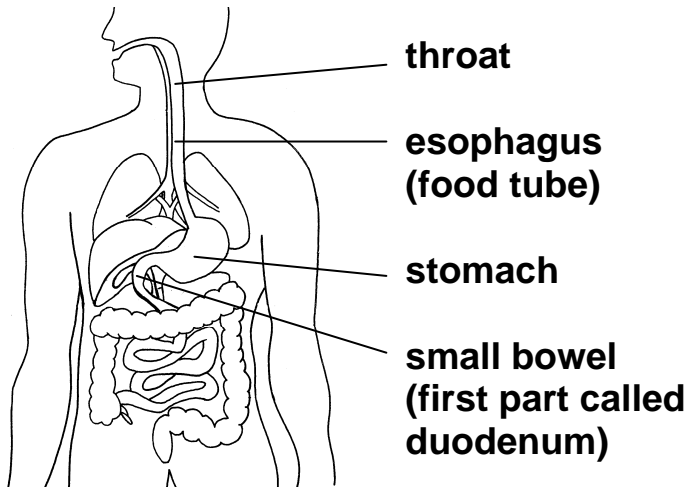


What is gastroscopy?

Gastroscopy is a procedure that looks at the lining of the upper digestive tract. This includes the throat, esophagus, stomach and the first part of the bowel called the duodenum. The doctor looks inside using a thin video camera and tube called a scope. Pictures are sent to a television monitor as the scope goes down.



A gastroscopy is done for many reasons. Your doctor will tell you why you are having this procedure. There are many ways to do this procedure depending on the doctor:

- light sedation where you get medication to make you sleep through an intravenous tube in your arm. You may also have freezing spray or gel in your throat.
- freezing spray or gel in your throat and you are awake during the procedure

Your doctor will explain how you are having this procedure done. It takes 10 to 20 minutes to do but plan to be at the hospital about 2 hours.

Are there any complications to this procedure?

Before you sign a consent form, your doctor should explain the problems that can occur. Complications are rare but include:

- The scope can tear or perforate the lining of the esophagus or stomach. This may be treated with bowel rest or surgery.
- There can be bleeding after a biopsy is done or a polyp is taken out. Bleeding can be stopped during the procedure but surgery or a blood transfusion may be needed.
- If you have an intravenous tube in your arm, you can get a lump or bruise on the skin. This can take a few days to a few months to go away.
- You may have a reaction to the medication used to relax you. The doctor and nurses can manage any complication that may happen. Tell the staff if you have ever had an allergic reaction to any medications or dyes.

Getting Ready at Home

Medications and allergies:

Your doctor may want you to stop taking certain medications 4 to 5 days before the test. Contact the doctor doing the procedure at least 1 week before to ask about your medications.

Prepare a list of the current medications you take and any allergies you have. You can ask your pharmacist to print a copy of your record for you. Bring this list or your medications to your procedure.

Prepare to bring all health insurance information to the hospital such as:

- your Ontario Health Insurance card and**
- any other insurance papers such as Blue Cross, Metropolitan etc.**

If you are having sedation:

Ask your doctor if you are having sedation. If you are, you must arrange for someone to take you home after the procedure. You cannot leave the hospital alone or drive for 24 hours. If you plan to take a taxi home, you still need to have someone with you. Make your plans ahead of time.

If you are not having sedation:

You can drive yourself or take a taxi when you are done.

Before Coming to the Hospital

Eating and drinking:

- If your test is in the morning before 12:00 noon, do not have anything to eat or drink after midnight.
- If your test is booked after 12:00 noon, you may have clear fluids at 6:00 a.m. Clear fluids are black tea and coffee, water and apple juice.

Getting to the hospital:

- If you are driving yourself to the hospital, you can park in the visitors parking ramp off James Street South.
- If you are getting a drive, your driver can drop you off at the front of the hospital on Charlton Avenue East.
- If English is not your first language, please bring someone who can interpret.

At the Hospital

Registration:

When you arrive at the Endoscopy Unit on Level 3 of the Sister Mary Grace Wing, register at the desk.

You will be asked to wait and a nurse will call you into a room.

Plan to be at the hospital about 2 hours. There are many doctors and patients in this unit so you may see people go in “out of order”.

In the Endoscopy room:

The nurse will ask you some questions and do a nursing history. The nurse will review your allergies and medications with you and help you get ready. You will wear a hospital gown over your clothes. You will remove your glasses and dentures just before the procedure.

The doctor will ask you to sign a consent form if you have not already signed one.

In the procedure room . . .

A nurse is always with you in the procedure room. You will take off your glasses and remove any dentures. You will be asked to bite on a special mouth guard called a bite block. You will then lie on your left side.

The doctor will give your sedation and/or freeze your throat with spray or gel. The doctor then slides the scope through the bite block into your mouth and down your throat. If you are awake, you will be asked to swallow to relax the muscles.

The scope takes pictures as it goes down. It does not cause trouble breathing or choking.

The doctor puts air into your stomach through the scope. This makes it easier to look around. The doctor can also take a sample of tissue for testing through the same tube. This is called a biopsy. You cannot feel this being done.

The scope is taken out when the doctor is done.

After the Procedure

If you had sedation . . .

- You will go to the Endoscopy Recovery area after the procedure.
- You will rest on a stretcher until you are fully awake. This takes about 1 hour.
- The nurse will monitor you and give you any instructions you need to follow at home.
- You must have someone take you home. Rest for the day.
- If your throat had freezing spray or gel, you cannot eat or drink for about ½ to 1 hour. **You must wait until the feeling returns to your throat.**
- You cannot drive, operate machinery, drink wine, beer or alcohol or make major decisions for 24 hours.

If you did not have sedation . . .

- The nurse will tell you that you can leave right away. You will get instructions to follow at home.
- If your throat had freezing spray or gel, you cannot eat or drink for about ½ to 1 hour. **You must wait until the feeling returns to your throat.**

If you have any questions, contact the doctor's office that ordered this test.