

WHAT IS AN UPPER ENDOSCOPY?

An Upper Endoscopy is a procedure performed through the mouth that enables the Doctor to see inside your upper gastrointestinal tract – your oesophagus, stomach and duodenum. This procedure is performed in a day hospital. Unlike x-rays, which take photographs of these areas, endoscopy lets the Doctor see the surface of these areas directly and provide far more detail and accuracy than an X-ray.

PREPARATION FOR UPPER ENDOSCOPY

Your stomach must be empty so do not eat anything for 8 hours before the endoscopy. Small amounts of water can be taken up until 4 hours before the endoscopy. Please continue with all your usual medications, especially all blood pressure and heart medications. This can be done up until 2 hours before the endoscopy with a sip of water. Please tell the Doctor if you have had any allergies or bad reactions to medications. The procedure is quite safe during pregnancy and while breast-feeding although, you should inform the Doctor if this applies to you.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING UPPER ENDOSCOPY?

A local anaesthetic may be sprayed on to your throat to make it numb. You will then be given medication by injection through a vein to make you sleepy and relaxed. You will probably have little memory from this procedure afterwards. However, the procedure can be performed without sedation if requested. While in a comfortable position on your left side, the Doctor will pass the endoscope through your mouth and down the throat. The endoscope itself is a plastic tube about as thick as a ball point pen. The instrument will not interfere with your breathing nor cause any pain. The examination takes about 20 minutes.

The endoscopy is performed with a high definition near focus endoscope enabling visualisation of the lining of the oesophagus, stomach and duodenum.