

ENDOSCOPY: WHAT TO EXPECT

1.6 Million Endoscopies are performed annually in the U.S. alone. In fact, endoscopies are one of the most common procedures performed in an ambulatory surgery center. Although endoscopies are common, many Americans are not familiar with procedure unless they have had an endoscopy before. This guide will serve as a resource to help your patients learn about what an endoscopy is, why one is needed, how to prepare and what to expect.

01 | What is an Endoscopy?

An endoscopy is a nonsurgical procedure used to examine a person's digestive tract by utilizing a lighted and flexible instrument called an endoscope. In general, an endoscope is introduced into the body through a natural opening such as the mouth or anus. Although endoscopy can include examination of other organs, the most common endoscopic procedures evaluate the esophagus, stomach, and portions of the intestine.

02 | Why Endoscopy?

An endoscopy is often recommended to evaluate the following:

- Stomach pain
- Ulcers and/or gastritis
- Swallowing difficulties
- Change in bowel habits such as constipation or diarrhea
- Polyps or growths in the colon

03 | How to Prepare

Your medical provider will give you specific instructions on how to prepare for your endoscopy. In some cases your medical provider will ask that you:

- Fast before the procedure – you will need to stop drinking and eating four to eight hours prior to ensure that the stomach is empty.
- Stop taking certain medications – you may be required to stop certain blood-thinning medications in the days prior to your endoscopy. Your medical provider will provide you with specific instructions regarding your medications.

04 | What to Expect?

Although, an endoscopy is a non-surgical procedure sedation options are available in order to make you more comfortable during the procedure. Sedation options may vary based on your preference, downtime and/or medical history. Discuss sedation with your medical provider to in order to determine your safest and most comfortable option.

An endoscopy typically takes between 10 to 20 minutes to complete. During the procedure, air is gently introduced via the endoscope to allow for the esophagus, stomach and intestines to open and allow full view. Small tissue samples called biopsies may be obtained for routine and precautionary testing.

After the endoscopy, you will be observed for a period of time, generally less than one hour, if you were sedated during the procedure. This will allow for the sedative medication to wear off. Once fully awake you will be released with post endoscopy and follow up instructions.

For more endoscopy resources, please visit:

<http://www.webmd.com/digestive-disorders/digestive-diseases-endoscopy>

Did You Know?

Endoscopy is one of the safest procedures performed in the U.S.

References

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/endoscopy/basics/what-you-can-expect/prc-20020363>

<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/inpatient-surgery.htm>