

# Gastroscopy



Interior Health  
Every person matters

Pre-Procedure Patient Information

[www.interiorhealth.ca](http://www.interiorhealth.ca)

Hospital \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Procedure \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Arrival \_\_\_\_\_

**If you need to cancel your procedure, please contact your endoscopist's office at least 2 WEEKS BEFORE your procedure.**

## What is a Gastroscopy?

A gastroscopy is a recommended procedure for investigation of intestinal symptoms such as abdominal pain, difficulty swallowing, or significant heartburn. It allows a doctor to see the inside lining of the esophagus, stomach and duodenum (first portion of the small bowel) using a special instrument called a gastroscope.

A gastroscope is a small flexible tube with a miniature camera attached to one end. It is passed through your mouth and down the back of your throat into your upper digestive tract. Your throat may be sprayed with a local anaesthetic before inserting the gastroscope. The tube does not interfere with your breathing but could make you gag. During a gastroscopy, tissue samples may be collected and abnormal growths may be removed. This is painless as the inside of your stomach has no nerve endings. A gastroscopy can also be performed to stretch a narrowing in the esophagus or stomach, or remove a foreign body that is stuck.

You will be closely monitored before, during and after your procedure. You will feel drowsy and relaxed from the sedation (this is not a general anesthetic).

## Who will do the Procedure?

A gastroenterologist, family physician endoscopist, or a general surgeon will explain the procedure to you and perform it. A nurse will assist the doctor and you, as the patient, throughout the procedure. The procedure will take about 5-15 minutes.

## How do I get ready?

- Before your gastroscopy, you need to STOP EATING AND DRINKING AT MIDNIGHT prior to your procedure. The procedure MUST be done with an empty stomach to allow the doctor good visualization and to prevent stomach contents from going into your lungs.
- Wear comfortable clothing to the hospital that is easy to take off and put on.
- Avoid wearing jewelry and scented products such as perfume or aftershave.
- If you have a caregiver that assists you to dress, please have them accompany you to the hospital.
- If you require an interpreter, please bring them with you.
- Expect to be at the hospital for 1-2 hours.
- Bring a list of medications and allergies to the hospital.
- If you wear hearing aids, and bring the case with you for safe storage during the procedure.
- Please do not bring valuables as the hospital is not responsible for any items that go missing.

*more information on other side →*

Healthlink BC	Nurse	24 hours a day	Daily	<i>Call 8-1-1 to speak with a nurse, ask a dietitian about nutrition, or a pharmacist about your medication.</i>
<b>Call 8-1-1</b>	Dietitian	9 am–5 pm	Mon–Fri	
	Pharmacist	5 pm–9 am	Daily	
	Hearing Impaired	Call 7-1-1		
<a href="http://www.healthlinkbc.ca">www.healthlinkbc.ca</a>				

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# Gastrosocopy (continued)

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## Stopping Medications

If you are taking **blood thinners** and/or **diabetes medications**, call your primary care provider or endoscopist for instructions about your dosage **AT LEAST 2 WEEKS BEFORE** the procedure.

If you have a Pre-Surgical Screening (PSS) appointment scheduled prior to your procedure date, your medications will be reviewed then.

Continue to take essential medications such as heart and blood pressure pills early in the morning on your procedure day with a sip of water.

If you have any questions about your medications, call your primary care provider, endoscopist, or Pre-Surgical Screening Clinic.

## Care after the Procedure

- You **MUST** arrange for a responsible adult to take you home after your procedure and stay with you for 24 hours.
- You can resume your normal activities, except those restricted for 24 hours after conscious sedation, as you are considered legally impaired.
- Take your medications as scheduled, unless told otherwise by your doctor.
- Start with a light meal and slowly increase from there.
- **The following is NORMAL:**
  - » Cramping or pressure in your abdomen. This can be relieved by expelling air from the bowel. Walking may help move the air along faster.
  - » You may or may not remember what happened during your procedure.
  - » Mild nausea.
  - » Sore throat.

## Are there any Risks?

- As with any medical procedure, gastroscopy has a small risk of complication.
- Serious complications are rare and can include a reaction to the medication used for sedation, heart or lung problems, an infection, bleeding, fluid can get into the lungs and may cause pneumonia, and/or perforation (a hole could be made that may require surgery).
- If a complication occurs, treatment including antibiotics, blood transfusion, hospitalization, repeat gastroscopy or surgery may be required.
- A barium x-ray is an alternative for some patients who do not want to, or cannot proceed with a gastroscopy. Barium x-rays have a slightly lower complication rate but are also less accurate than gastroscopy.

## Go to the nearest Emergency Department if you experience any of the following symptoms:

- Extreme sleepiness.
- Breathing difficulties.
- Skin is pale with bluish coloring to lips, fingers or toes.
- Pain is getting worse and not relieved by medication.
- Persistent nausea and vomiting (more than 16 hours after the procedure).
- Fever of 38.5°C / 101.3°F or greater.