

Endoscopy

What is Endoscopy?

- Endoscopy in a broad term related to the procedure of placing a camera in the digestive tract.
- Upper Endoscopy is a term for looking through the mouth into the esophagus, stomach and the top part of the duodenum. What is Endoscopy?
- Lower Endoscopy, more often termed colonoscopy, is a term for placing the camera in the large bowel / colon via the rectum.

Why might this test be recommended?

- This test can allow us to obtain more information about the GI tract including the health of the lining.
- In addition to photos, tiny biopsies (that don't hurt) can be obtained to help further get clues to help diagnose a condition or monitor a condition.
- The most common things that can be evaluated is to see about Inflammatory Bowel Disease, Celiac disease, and Eosinophilic Esophagitis. It is can also be helpful to see where bleeding where may be coming from.

Is it risky?

- This is something you need to discuss with the gastroenterologist. The procedure does have some risk but there can also be some benefit and the balance is factored when it is brought forward in discussion with you.

BCCH Endoscopy / Procedure Resources

BCCH Video about Endoscopy at BCCH

- 5 minute video explaining endoscopy and the process at BC Children's Hospital

BCCH Information about Upper Endoscopy

- Information Sheet (EGD) Upper Endoscopy

BCCH Information about Endoscopy and Colonoscopy

- Information Sheet (EGD) Upper and Colonoscopy

BCCH Handout from Child Life

- Helping Your Child Manage Medical and Surgical Procedures

General Endoscopy Resources

Gikids.org

- Colonoscopy for Kids (includes Comic Strip - How to prepare for a colonoscopy - Bowel Prep)

Gikids.org

- Information on Upper Endoscopy

Medical College of Wisconsin - Animated video for children

- Upper Endoscopy: Guide for Children

Medical College of Wisconsin - Animated video for children

- Lower Endoscopy: Guide for Children

Medical College of Wisconsin - Animated video for children

- Upper and Lower Endoscopy: Guide for Children

Frequently Asked Questions

Tell me more about Endoscopy

- Endoscopy is a procedure that allows a doctor to see the lining of the GI tract from the inside.
- Upper endoscopy is when the tube is put through the mouth.
- Colonoscopy is when the tube is put through the anus. Both are forms of endoscopy.
- Endoscopy uses a flexible tube (an endoscope) with a light and a camera connected to a TV screen

Can you tell me about biopsies?

- During the test, in addition to seeing the lining, the doctor can take small samples called biopsies.
- Biopsies can be examined under a microscope (after the procedure) and can provide more information. Biopsies are about the size of the tip of a ballpoint pen. They do not hurt, and the tissue grows back.

Can you see the whole intestine when an endoscopy is done?

- During an upper endoscopy, the physician can see the lining of the esophagus, stomach, and the beginning of the small intestine (duodenum).
- With colonoscopy (endoscopy of the colon), the entire colon (large intestine) and usually the end of the small intestine (terminal ileum) can be seen.
- The middle part of the small intestine usually can not be seen by endoscopy or colonoscopy.

Why is endoscopy being done?

- There are many different reasons to use endoscopy. Your doctor should explain them to you.

Why do I need 'prep' before my colonoscopy?

- The purpose of the 'prep' is to clean out your colon so that the doctor performing the colonoscopy can best see the lining in full detail.
- Naturally, if there are large amounts of stool in the colon, it can make the test very difficult to perform, and it is more difficult to see things in detail.

Does the procedure hurt? How about if biopsies are taken?

- The short answer is no. You will not have discomfort during the procedure including during biopsies. To ensure this level of comfort we have a separate doctor whose main job is to make sure that you stay safe and comfortable. The medications are usually given through an intravenous (IV) line in your hand. You will have numbing cream put on your hand before the IV is started to minimize any discomfort.