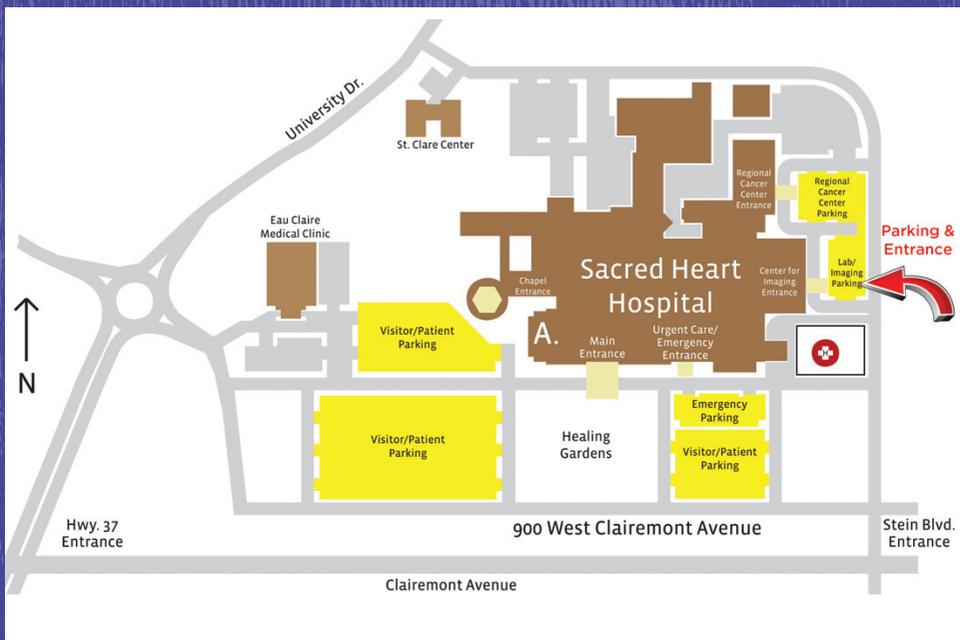


If you have any questions, you can call Radiology at 715-717-6985 or you may call your doctor's office.

Patient Guide



GI

Upper Gastrointestinal Test



Sacred Heart Hospital

AN AFFILIATE OF HOSPITAL SISTERS HEALTH SYSTEM

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Upper Gastrointestinal Test (GI)

An upper gastrointestinal (GI) test uses x-rays to help find problems in the upper GI tract, which includes the esophagus, stomach and duodenum. The esophagus is the tube that carries food from your mouth to your stomach. The duodenum is the first part of the small intestine. This test helps find the reason for problems like stomach pain, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, bleeding, or weight loss.

A barium swallow (esophagram) is an x-ray test to look at the esophagus using barium liquid, a white, chalky substance that helps the esophagus show up better on the x-ray. This test will help find problems that affect the esophagus like heartburn, bleeding, blockage, cancer, hernia (defective walls), or diverticuli (pouches). It may also help to find out what is causing hard or painful swallowing.

An enteroclysis is a test of your small intestine where a tube will be put into your nose and down your throat, into the first part of your small intestine. Barium will be put in through the tube. X-rays will be taken as the barium travels through your small intestine until it reaches the large intestine.

Before the Test

The night before the test you should only have clear liquids for supper, like clear juice (apple, cranberry or grape juice), jello, or water. Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the day of the test. Bring your medicines (or medicine list) with you to the test. You may take medicine with sips of water up to one hour before the test.

Women should let their doctor know if they are pregnant before the test.

During the Test

While sitting or standing in front of an x-ray machine, you will drink the barium liquid, which coats the lining of the upper GI tract and shows problems more clearly on the x-ray. X-ray video (fluoroscopy) is used to watch the barium move through the upper GI tract. To fully coat the upper GI tract with barium, the person doing the test (technologist or radiologist) may press on your stomach or ask you to change position. You hold still in different positions, letting the technologist or radiologist take x-rays of the upper GI tract from different views. This test can take one hour but may take up to three hours depending on how fast the barium moves.

After the Procedure

A medicine (laxative) to help you have a bowel movement is usually given after the test because barium can make you constipated. Your bowel movements will look white or light yellow until the barium has all passed through your digestive tract. Drink plenty of liquids after the test to help get rid of the barium and reduce the risk of constipation. You may resume your usual medicines, diet, and activity unless otherwise told by your doctor.

Your doctor will have your test results in 2-3 days.