

X - R a y U p p e r G I

Appointment Information

Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____

Address: _____

Notes: _____

About

Upper gastrointestinal tract radiography, also called an upper GI, is an x-ray examination of the esophagus, stomach and first part of the small intestine (also known as the duodenum). Images are produced using a special form of x-ray called fluoroscopy and an orally ingested contrast material such as barium.

In addition to drinking barium, some patients are also given baking-soda crystals (similar to Alka-Seltzer) to further improve the images. This procedure is called an air-contrast or double-contrast upper GI.

On occasion, some patients are given other forms of orally ingested contrast, usually containing iodine. These alternative contrast materials may be used if the patient has recently undergone surgery on the GI tract, or has allergies to other contrast materials. Your radiologist will determine which type of contrast material will be used.

An x-ray of the upper GI tract can help detect:

- Ulcers
- Tumors
- Inflammation
- Hiatal hernias
- Scarring
- Blockages
- Abnormalities of the muscular wall of GI tract

Prior to your x-ray of your upper GI tract, you will need to drink, which will then pass into your digestive tract. Once the upper GI tract is adequately coated with the barium, still x-ray images will be taken and stored for further review.

When the examination is complete, you will be asked to wait until the radiologist determines that all the necessary images have been obtained. This exam is usually completed within 20 minutes.

Preparations

You will be given detailed instructions on how to prepare for your x-ray of your upper GI tract when you schedule your exam.

You should inform your radiologist of any medications you are taking and if you have any allergies, especially to barium or iodinated contrast materials. Also inform your radiologist about recent illnesses or other medical conditions.

To ensure the best possible image quality, your stomach must be empty of food. Therefore, you will likely be asked not to eat or drink anything (including any medications taken by mouth, especially antacids) and to refrain from chewing gum after midnight on the day of the examination.

You may be asked to remove some or all of your clothes and to wear a gown during the exam.

Women should always inform their radiologist and x-ray technologist if there is any possibility that they are pregnant.