

## What is a Gastroscopy?

A gastroscopy (also called an upper endoscopy or OGD) is a procedure that allows your gastroenterologist to examine the lining of your oesophagus (food pipe), stomach and the upper small intestine (duodenum) using a flexible tube with a camera on the end.

The procedure is performed to investigate symptoms such as persistent abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, difficulty swallowing, or unexplained weight loss. It can also help diagnose conditions such as ulcers, inflammation, bleeding, or tumours.

## Before the Procedure

- You will need to fast (not eat) for at least 6 hours before the procedure but can have clear fluids up until 2 hours (**do not chew gum or suck on lollies**) prior to your admission time - this is the time you are expected to arrive at the hospital, not the time of your procedure
- **Important: Please advise us if you are taking diabetic medications, blood thinners, or weight loss medications as these may need to be adjusted before your procedure. Most diabetic medications should not be taken on the day of the procedure. Extended fasting instructions may be given for weight loss medications**
- Wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothing

## During the Procedure

The procedure typically takes 10-20 minutes. You will be given sedation to help you relax and make the procedure more comfortable. A local anaesthetic spray may also be applied to your throat.

The gastroscope (thin, flexible tube with a camera) will be gently passed through your mouth, down your oesophagus, and into your stomach and duodenum. Carbon dioxide is typically used to inflate the stomach for better visualisation. Your doctor may take small tissue samples (biopsies) for laboratory analysis if needed.

## After the Procedure

### Immediately After

- You will be monitored in the recovery area until the sedation wears off
- You may experience a sore throat, which is normal and should resolve within 24-48 hours
- You may feel bloated or have mild cramping due to the inflation used during the procedure
- You can usually eat and drink normally once you are fully awake, unless advised otherwise
- Your doctor will discuss preliminary findings with you before discharge and give you a copy of your report

## Important Post-Procedure Instructions

### CRITICAL SAFETY REQUIREMENTS:

- **You MUST have a responsible adult pick you up and stay with you for 24 hours after the procedure. You are not permitted to take a taxi or rideshare service, public transport, walk or drive yourself home after the procedure**
- **DO NOT drive, operate machinery, or make important decisions for 24 hours after sedation**
- **DO NOT drink alcohol for 24 hours after the procedure**
- **DO NOT sign legal documents or make important decisions for 24 hours**
- Avoid strenuous activity for the rest of the day
- Take the rest of the day off work

## Possible Risks and Complications

Gastroscopy is generally a safe procedure, but like all medical procedures, it carries some risks. These include:

### Common (usually minor):

- Sore throat (temporary, usually resolves within 1-2 days)
- Bloating or mild abdominal discomfort
- Mild nausea
- Reaction to sedation (drowsiness, dizziness)

### Rare but serious:

- Bleeding (especially if biopsies are taken or polyps removed) – often self-limited
- Perforation (tear in the stomach or oesophagus lining)
- Infection
- Adverse reaction to sedation or anaesthetic
- Aspiration (breathing stomach contents into the lungs)

## When to Seek Immediate Medical Attention

Contact your doctor or go to the emergency department immediately if you experience any of the following:

- Severe abdominal pain
- Vomiting blood or passing black/tarry stools
- Fever or chills
- Severe chest pain or difficulty breathing
- Difficulty swallowing that persists beyond 24 hours
- Persistent or worsening bleeding

## Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns before or after your procedure, please contact:

### Gastro Practice Melbourne

Phone: (03) 8488 8822

Email: [admin@gastropractice.com.au](mailto:admin@gastropractice.com.au)

***In case of emergency outside business hours,  
please attend your nearest emergency department or call 000.***