

**WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE  
COMPLICATIONS OF UPPER  
ENDOSCOPY?**

Endoscopy is generally safe. Complications can occur but are rare when the test is performed by physicians with specialized training and experience in this procedure. Bleeding may occur from a biopsy site or where a polyp was removed. It is usually minimal and rarely requires blood transfusions or surgery. Localized irritation of the vein where the medication was injected may rarely cause a tender lump lasting for several weeks, but this will go away eventually. Applying heat packs or hot moist towels may help relieve discomfort. Other potential risks include a reaction to the sedatives used and complications from heart or lung diseases. Major complications, eg, perforation (a tear that might require surgery for repair) are very uncommon.

It is important for you to recognize early signs of any possible complication. If you begin to run a fever after the test, begin to have trouble swallowing, or have increasing throat, chest, or abdominal pain, let your doctor know about it promptly.

Your procedure will be in the **Central Massachusetts Ambulatory Endoscopy Center** (located in the middle office of the Center For Digestive Wellness, right next to this office), at 105 Erdman Way Leominster, Ma.

**OR**

Your procedure will be in the **Endoscopy** area on the second floor at Leominster Hospital. Follow the signs as you enter the hospital complex to get there. You may be dropped off at the DAY SURGERY drop-off area located across from the old Simonds Building, between the hospital and the Medical Building.

**DATE OF PROCEDURE:**

---

**TIME TO REPORT FOR  
PROCEDURE:**

---

**You should be ready to be  
Picked up 3 hours after you are  
dropped off, but cannot drive  
yourself home.**

**YOUR UPPER  
ENDOSCOPY  
PROCEDURE**

*Elliot J Feinberg, MD  
Belden DiVito, PA-C  
105 Erdman Way  
Leominster, MA 01453  
978-537-7552*





## UPPER ENDOSCOPY

### **WHAT IS UPPER ENDOSCOPY?**

Upper endoscopy is a procedure that enables your physician to examine the lining of the upper part of your gastrointestinal tract, ie, the esophagus, stomach, and duodenum (first portion of the small intestine) using a thin flexible tube with its own lens and light source.

### **◆ WHY IS UPPER ENDOSCOPY DONE?**

Upper endoscopy is usually performed to evaluate symptoms of persistent upper abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, or difficulty swallowing. It is also the best test for finding the cause of bleeding from the upper gastrointestinal tract.

Upper endoscopy is more accurate than x-ray films for detecting inflammation, ulcers, or tumors of the esophagus, stomach, and duodenum. Upper endoscopy can detect early cancer and can distinguish between benign and malignant (cancerous) conditions when biopsies (small tissue samples) of suspicious areas are obtained. Biopsies are taken for many reasons and do not necessarily mean that cancer is suspected.

Upper endoscopy is also used to treat conditions present in the upper gastrointestinal tract. A variety of instruments can be passed through the endoscope that allow many abnormalities to be treated directly with little or no discomfort, for example, stretching narrowed areas, removing polyps (usually benign growths) or swallowed objects, or treating upper gastrointestinal bleeding. Safe and effective endoscopic control of bleeding has reduced the need for transfusions and surgery in many patients.

### **WHAT PREPARATION IS REQUIRED?**

For the best (and safest) examination, the stomach must be completely empty. **You should have nothing to eat or drink, including water, for approximately 6 hours before the examination.** Your doctor will be more specific about the time to begin fasting, depending on the time of day that your test is scheduled.

It is best to inform your doctor of your current medications as well as any allergies several days prior to the examination. You should alert your doctor if you require antibiotics prior to undergoing dental procedures, since you may need antibiotics prior to upper endoscopy as well.

### **ARRANGEMENTS TO GET HOME AFTER THE TEST**

If you are sedated, you will need to arrange to have someone accompany you home from the examination because sedatives may affect your judgment and reflexes for the rest of the day. If you received sedation, you will not be allowed to drive after the procedure even though you may not feel tired.

### **WHAT CAN BE EXPECTED DURING THE UPPER ENDOSCOPY?**

Your doctor will review with you why upper endoscopy is being performed, whether any alternative tests are available, and possible complications from the procedure. Practices may vary among doctors, but you may have your throat sprayed with a local anesthetic before the test begins and may be given medication through a vein to help you relax during the test. While you are in a comfortable position on your side, the endoscope is passed through the mouth and then in turn through the esophagus, stomach, and duodenum. The endoscope does not interfere with your breathing during the test. Most patients consider the test to be only slightly uncomfortable and many patients fall asleep during the procedure.

