

If you're experiencing unpleasant GI symptoms and want to know the cause, endoscopy can give you answers. At Pioneer GI Clinic, the board-certified gastroenterologists perform upper endoscopies to diagnose or rule out precancerous stomach and esophagus problems. Schedule an appointment by calling the office in Anchorage, Alaska, or requesting an appointment online.

What is upper endoscopy?

Upper endoscopy is a procedure your gastroenterologist uses to examine your upper digestive tract, including your esophagus, stomach, and upper part of the small intestine, using a long, flexible tube and tiny camera. They can detect, diagnose, and treat GI problems during upper endoscopy.

What is upper endoscopy used for?

Your gastroenterologist might recommend upper endoscopy if you have unexplained GI symptoms, such as:

- Bleeding
- Persistent heartburn
- Pain
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Unexplained weight loss
- Swallowing problems

Your gastroenterologist can use upper endoscopy to diagnose gastroesophageal reflux disease, ulcers, cancer, inflammation, a precancerous condition of the esophagus called Barrett's esophagus, celiac disease, esophageal narrowing, blockages, and much more.

How should I prepare for upper endoscopy?

Follow your gastroenterology team's pre-procedure instructions, such as not consuming foods or drinks eight hours before your scheduled appointment. You may have to stop taking certain medications several days prior to endoscopy.

Make arrangements to have someone drive you home after the procedure, and plan to take the rest of the day off from work and strenuous activities.

What should I expect during the procedure?

When you arrive for your upper endoscopy, you lie down on a comfortable exam table on your side or your back. Your provider might attach breathing, heart rate, or blood pressure monitors to you. They offer you a sedative to help you feel relaxed, and spray an anesthetic in your mouth to numb the area where an endoscope is inserted.

During upper endoscopy, your gastroenterologist puts the endoscope through your mouth and asks you to swallow. You might feel some pressure but no pain, and the tube doesn't interfere with your breathing.

Your gastroenterologist uses a tiny camera attached to the endoscope to view images inside your upper GI tract. They might collect tissue samples or remove polyps. The procedure might last 15-30 minutes, but every upper endoscopy is different.

What happens after upper endoscopy?

After upper endoscopy, you recover while the sedation wears off. Have a friend or family member drive you home. You might experience temporary side effects, such as a sore throat, cramping, bloating, or gas. Rest for the remainder of the day.

When your gastroenterology team receives your upper endoscopy results, they review them with you and let you know the next steps. Your gastroenterologist might recommend watchful waiting, additional diagnostic testing, or specific treatments based on your condition.

Don't let gastrointestinal diseases go undetected and untreated. Schedule an appointment at Pioneer GI Clinic by calling the office or using the online scheduling tool and find out if upper endoscopy is right for you.