

About Your Upper GI Series

What You Need to Know and Do

An upper GI series is an X-ray exam of your upper digestive tract (the area from your mouth to the start of your small intestine). A substance called barium is used to make your digestive tract show up more clearly on the X-ray.

This test is used to diagnose problems such as ulcers, tumors and certain diseases.

What should I do before my appointment?

You should not eat or drink 8 hours before your test. You may need to stop taking your medicine. Talk to us before your test to find out how you need to prepare.

Do not smoke the morning of the test.

When should I arrive for my appointment?

You will need to arrive at least 30 minutes before your appointment time to check in and complete paperwork.

What happens during my test?

You will drink barium. You may also swallow another substance (“fizzies”) that makes air build up in your stomach.

You may be asked to stand or lie in different positions.

You will be asked to hold your breath for a short time when the X-ray is taken.

The test usually takes 30 minutes.

What happens after my test?

You can usually go back to your normal activities and normal diet right away.