

ERCP (Endoscopic Retrograde Cholangiopancreatography)

ENDOSCOPY PROCEDURES



CAYUGA ENDOSCOPY CENTER



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A Member of Cayuga Health System



ERCP (Endoscopic Retrograde Cholangiopancreatography)

What is the test?

ERCP is a test used to evaluate the biliary and pancreatic ducts. These tiny channels carry bile from the liver and pancreatic juice from the pancreas to the common bile duct, which connects to the top part of the small intestine. ERCP combines endoscopic and imaging technology to visualize these ducts. This exam may be used to evaluate conditions such as acute or recurring inflammation of the pancreas, unexplained abdominal pain, jaundice, bile duct disease, or to visualize the area prior to therapeutic endoscopy to remove a duct stone or place a stent.

How do I prepare?

You may consume only clear liquids after midnight on the night before a morning procedure. (These instructions are for an early morning procedure and are modified if your exam is scheduled for late morning or afternoon.) If you are taking aspirin or blood thinners, talk with your doctor about the possible need to discontinue them prior to your ERCP.

This exam requires an anesthesiologist to provide sedation. You will speak with your anesthesiologist prior to your procedure and will have an opportunity to discuss your plan at that time.

Please make arrangements ahead of time for transportation. You must have a family member or friend with you to review test results and discharge instructions, and to drive you home afterwards. We ask that the person driving you remain in the building during your procedure. If you need to use taxi or bus service for transportation a family member or friend must accompany you. We require this because the sedation you will receive prior to the ERCP remains in your system and makes it unsafe for you to drive a car or perform tasks that require alertness and coordination for the remainder of the day.

What can I expect during the procedure?

Plan to arrive 30 minutes prior to your procedure. Once you arrive in the Endoscopy Department, a nurse will take your health history and blood pressure, and the doctor will answer any questions you have about the procedure. You will receive an intravenous sedative to make you drowsy.

The gastroenterologist will then introduce the endoscope through your mouth and advance it slowly into your esophagus, through the stomach, and into the small intestine where the bile and pancreatic ducts enter. Through a small hollow tube passed through the endoscope the physician will inject contrast medium into the duct being examined. X-rays are then taken to identify stones, narrowings, or abnormalities. If a stone is present in the duct, the gastroenterologist can remove it at this time. Similarly, if a narrowing is identified, a stent can be placed to open it up. ERCP takes about 2 hours and you should plan to spend 4 to 6 hours at the medical center. Occasionally, patients stay overnight following this procedure.

How and when will I get my test results?

After your exam, you will be moved to the recovery area until you are fully awake and meet certain discharge criteria. Your physician will discuss the results with you and your companion and send a report to your primary care provider. Within 2 to 4 hours, you may eat a light meal. The day after the procedure, you may resume a full diet.

Where is the test performed?

ERCP is performed at Cayuga Medical Center at 101 Dates Drive, off NYS Route 96 in Ithaca.