

# ERCP Exam (Endoscopic Retrograde Cholangio Pancreatography)

## Endoscopic Retrograde Cholangio Pancreatography (ERCP) Exam

Your health care provider wants you to have an endoscopic retrograde cholangio pancreatography (ERCP) exam. This exam lets your health care provider see your pancreas, bile ducts, liver and gallbladder.

A gastroenterologist (a specially trained doctor) will gently insert a thin, flexible tube (duodenoscope) down your mouth into your esophagus, stomach and duodenum.

The exam will be done in the X-ray Department. The exam takes 30 to 60 minutes. Carefully read the following information.

## Food and Liquid Directions Before Your Procedure

These directions are based on your scheduled arrival time. Not following these directions could mean your procedure will be delayed or canceled.

### Alcohol and tobacco: 24 hours

- Do not drink any alcohol 24 hours before your scheduled arrival time.
- Do not smoke, vape, use chewing tobacco or use any other tobacco products up to 24 hours before your scheduled arrival time.

### Regular foods: 8 hours

- Eat your regular foods up to 8 hours before your scheduled arrival time.

### Light solid foods: 6 hours

- You may eat light solid foods up to 6 hours before your scheduled arrival time. A light meal is:
  - juice or coffee with milk or cream
  - 1 piece of toast **or** 1 bowl of oatmeal or hot cereal.
- Do not eat any nuts or nut butters.
- Do not eat foods that are heavy or high in fat such as meat or fried foods.

### Clear liquids: 2 hours

- Drink only clear liquids up to 2 hours before your scheduled arrival time.
  - Drink water, fruit juice without pulp, black coffee, clear pop or tea.
  - Do not have milk, yogurt or energy drinks.

### Medicines

- Take your medicines as directed with a small sip of water.

### Guidelines for babies

- **6 hours** before the scheduled arrival time
  - you may give formula.
- **4 hours** before the scheduled arrival time
  - you may give breastmilk.

(over)

## Before the Exam

- Some medicines, such as aspirin and blood thinners, might be stopped a few days before your exam. Your health care provider will talk with you about this.
- Tell your health care provider if you are allergic to iodine or X-ray contrast.
- If you are having this exam as an outpatient, you need to arrange to have someone drive you home. You will not be able to drive for 24 hours after you receive the exam medicines.
- You will be asked to wear a hospital gown and robe.
- A nurse will ask for your medical history.
- You will be asked to sign a consent form.
- An intravenous (IV) line will be started in your hand or arm.
- You will be given an antibiotic (medicine) in the IV line.
- You will be brought to the X-ray Department on a cart.

## During the Exam

- You will be given a medicine through the IV to help you relax.
- Your health care provider will spray a numbing medicine on the back of your throat.
- The nurse will watch your heart rate, blood pressure and oxygen levels.

- Your health care provider will gently insert a duodenoscope (thin, flexible scope the size of your little finger) down your mouth.
- The tube will be guided through your esophagus (a tube that passes food from your mouth to your stomach), then through your stomach into your duodenum (the first part of your small intestine). This will not affect your breathing.
- You will lie on your stomach.
- Your health care provider will pass a cannula (small tube) through the duodenoscope. X-ray dye is put through the cannula to make it easier to see your bile duct system.
- Your health care provider may need to make a small cut in your bile duct to remove a stone.

## After the Exam

- If you are an outpatient, you will be in the recovery area until you are ready to go home. This usually takes about 2 hours. During that time, a nurse will watch you. A friend or family member may also be with you.
- Before you leave, the nurse will give you a list of home care instructions to follow. Follow the list carefully.

If you have any questions about the exam, call your health care provider.