

About Your Upper GI or Barium Swallow



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R. D. 1/07
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What is an Upper GI (UGI) or Barium Swallow?



An Upper GI or Barium Swallow is an X-ray test that is used to check how your throat, stomach and small intestines (gut) are working.

If you are a patient staying in the hospital, your appointment will be made for you.

If you are a clinic patient, when you make the appointment for your test tell the clerk if:

- You have diabetes.
- You have seizures (fits).

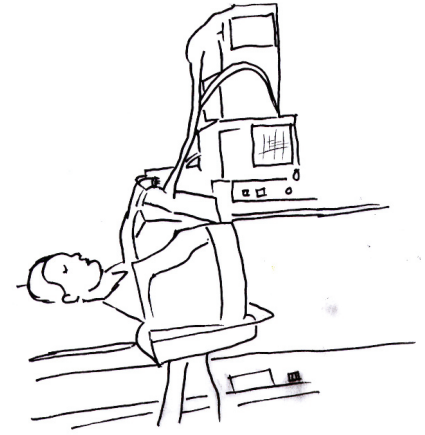
How do I get ready for this test?

- Eat a light evening meal the day before the test. For example, you could have soup and crackers, or jello.  
- After 11:00 pm that night do not eat or drink anything at all, because it may make you sick during the test.
- Do **not** eat or drink anything the morning of the test.
- Do **not** take any of your medicines in the morning before the test. Bring all your regular medicines with you. You may take them when the test is over.
- Do not chew gum or smoke in the morning before the test. This may make a difference in how well the test works.
- Come to the Radiology Department on the Ground Floor 30 minutes before your appointment. Bring a photo ID and have your medical record number with you.




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What will happen during the test?

- You will be asked some questions about problems you may have when you swallow.
- You be asked to put on a hospital gown and lie on the X-ray table. Then you will be asked to drink some Barium and some crystals which are like Alka-Seltzer.
- The technologist will take X-ray pictures while you swallow this.
- When the doctor has checked all your pictures, you will be ready to go back to your room, or home.



What do I need to do after this test?

- It is normal for your stools to be a lighter color or look chalky for the first 24 to 72 hours (1 to 3 days) after your test.
- Go back to taking your usual medicines. 
- Go back to eating what you usually do, but add high fiber foods such as raw fruits (apples, pears) and raw vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower). 
- Drink 8 or more big glasses of water, juice, clear soda or cola to help pass the barium through your bowel. 
- Go back to your usual activities as soon as you feel able to.

How will I find out the results of the test?



If you are in the hospital, the health care provider who ordered your test will tell you about your test results when they are ready. If you are a clinic patient your health care provider will tell you about your results at your next clinic appointment. Be sure to keep this important appointment. If you do not have a follow-up clinic appointment, call and schedule one with your health care provider.