

## Questions?

Your physician will speak to you before your procedure and may ask to speak with you after your procedure to explain any findings or to arrange a follow-up appointment to discuss your results.

If you wish to call your Endoscopist's office for results, please allow up to 2 weeks for results.

## Endoscopic Retrograde Cholangiopancreatography (ERCP)

*Information for patients and  
families*



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# What is an ERCP?

It is a technique that uses X-ray to view the patient's bile and pancreatic ducts.

## PREPARING FOR AN ERCP

- No eating after midnight the night before your procedure.
- you can have clear fluids (water, juice, coffee or tea – no milk or cream) up until 2 hours before your procedure.
- Take your prescribed medications, as outlined by your family physician, with a small sip of water.
- Please leave your valuables at home.
- Arrange to have a friend or family member take you home after the procedure.
- You may be asked to adjust the dose of your medications (such as insulin and other diabetic medications).
- If you are taking blood thinning medications, check with your prescribing physician whether these medications need to be stopped or continued for the ERCP procedure.

## WHAT HAPPENS DURING AN ERCP?

- The procedure typically takes 30-60 minutes to complete.
- An intravenous (IV) needle will be put in your arm or hand.
- You will be given medication through the IV to make you feel relaxed.
- You will also get a plastic mouth guard to protect your teeth.
- ERCPs are performed in a room containing X-ray equipment. You will lie on a special table during the examination, generally on your stomach.
- Your doctor will insert the camera through your mouth. Most people have no difficulty with this because of the sedating medications.

## YOUR DOCTOR MIGHT ALSO:

- Perform a biopsy or brushing, taking of cells from inside your ducts using a brush that fits through the endoscope.
- Treat problems that he or she sees, like stone removal, stent insertion/removal to fix strictures (you will not feel this.)

## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER AN ERCP?

- After the procedure, you will be observed in a recovery area until the effects of the sedative medication wear off.
- Once you have met the discharge criteria, you will be able to go home.
- A nurse will review your discharge instructions with you .
- Your physician may ask to see you before you leave.
- You may eat normally after the procedure.
- Do not return to work on the day of procedure.
- Do not drive a car or operate machinery until the next day.

## IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING PROBLEMS AFTER YOUR ERCP:

- Severe abdominal pain
- Vomiting
- Fever or chills
- Difficulty in swallowing or a severe sore throat
- A "crunching" feeling under the skin of the neck



**Call your doctor immediately or go to your nearest Emergency Department.**