

Getting Ready for an ERCP

What is ERCP?

Endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) is an exam done to look at your bile or pancreatic duct. It can help to diagnose problems of the pancreas, bile ducts, liver, and gall bladder.

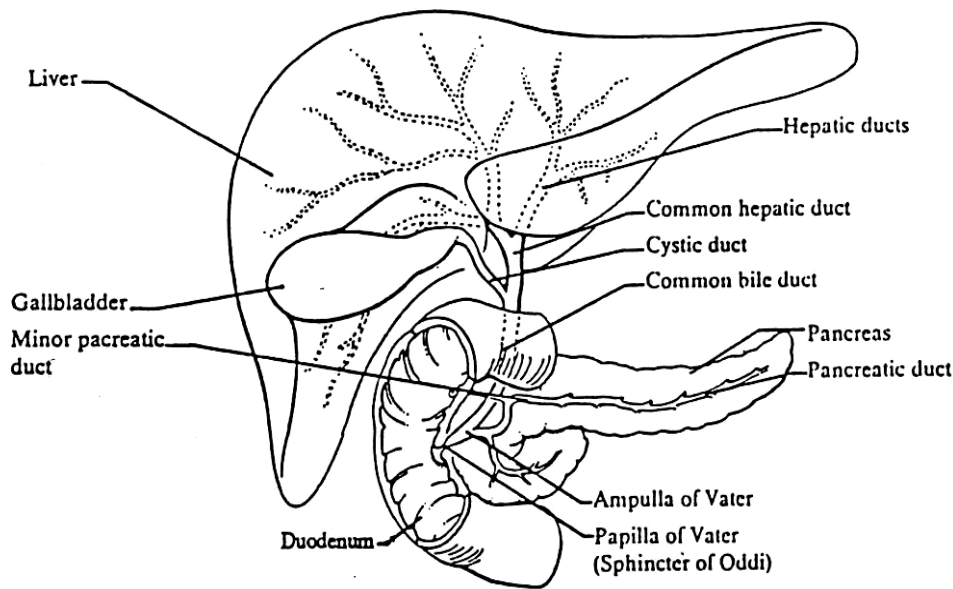
How is an ERCP done?

During the exam, a tube is passed through your mouth, esophagus (the tube that connects the throat to the stomach), stomach, and the first part of the small bowel. Once in place, a small plastic tube is threaded into the ducts, a dye is injected, and x-ray pictures are taken.

Treatment can also be done at this time.

Treatments allow us to:

- Enlarge the bile duct opening.
- Remove gallstones lodged in the bile duct.
- Place a stent (drain) in the duct.
- Take a biopsy.



***Important – Please read this handout 1 week in advance. Your procedure may be cancelled if you do not follow the instructions.**

Important to Know

1. Never stop taking blood thinners without talking with your doctor first. They will tell you how to safely stop these medicines. Call us if you have questions.
 - a. **7 Days Before**
Stop taking the blood thinner Effient[®] (prasugrel).
 - b. **5 Days Before**
Stop taking the blood thinners Coumadin[®] (warfarin) or Plavix[®] (clopidogrel).
 - c. **2 Days Before**
Stop taking the blood thinners Pradaxa[®] (dabigatran), Xeralto[®] (rivaroxaban), Eliquis[®] (apixaban) and Brilinta[®] (ticagrelor).
2. Diabetes medicines (oral and insulin) will need to be adjusted for the time you're not eating like you normally do. Please discuss this with your primary doctor.
3. **Plan ahead.** You will get medicine to help you relax which can affect your judgment. You must have an adult to drive you home or your exam will be cancelled. You may take a cab or bus home but, you must have an adult with you other than the driver.
4. Our staff will need to review your health history. This includes any past surgeries, allergies, and medicines that you take. Please bring this information with you.
5. If you use **CPAP or BiPAP** for sleep apnea, please bring it with you. We will need your machine to safely sedate you.

The Day of Your ERCP

1. You are not able to have any solid food, milk or dairy products.
2. You may drink clear liquids until **4 hours** before you arrive (i.e. water, apple juice, soda, Gatorade[®]). This is done to keep you safe. **Do not drink red liquids.**
3. Take your normal medicines with a small sip of clear liquid up to **1 hour** before you arrive. **Do not take medicines mentioned under the "Important to Know" section.**
4. **Follow the instructions in your cover letter.** If you are running late, call us at **(608) 263-8094** to let us know. If you are more than 30 minutes late, we may have to cancel and reschedule. We do our best to stay on time.
5. Plan to be with us about 3-5 hours. Your driver will need to be available in our waiting room or by phone.

The Test

A nurse will review your health history and place an IV. The IV is used to give you medicines which make you feel drowsy and relaxed during your test. You will be placed on an x-ray table and will lie on your stomach for the exam. If there is a chance that you are pregnant, we will need to know this before using the x-ray machine. The test will take about 1 hour.

After the test you will go to our recovery room for about 1½ hours. Your driver may sit with you there. Once awake, you may be given something to drink. Sometimes patients will need to stay in the hospital for the night.

Your doctor will discuss results with you before you go home. You and the doctor who referred you will get a copy of the report.

After the Exam and for the Rest of the Day

- Do not return to work.
- Do not drive.
- Do not use heavy machinery.
- Do not make any important decisions.
- Plan to rest.
- Do not drink alcohol.
- You should be able to resume normal daily tasks the day after your exam.
- You may have a mild sore throat. Gargling salt water should help.
- You will be asked to stay on a liquid diet for the rest of the day.
- You may have some gas pains from the air used to distend your stomach. Belching will help.
- You should have someone stay with you overnight after the procedure.

How to Contact Us

GI Procedure Center at University Hospital
7:00 am to 5:00 pm
(608) 263-8094

Digestive Health Center at Meriter Hospital

8:00 am to 5:00 pm
(608) 417-6389

After clinic hours, this number will give you the paging operator. Ask for the gastroenterology (GI) doctor on call. Leave your name and phone number with the area code. The doctor will call you back.

If you live out of the area, call
1-800-323-8942.

If you are not able to keep your visit, let us know 5 days in advance.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright ©12/2018. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#4516