

Upper GI (Gastrointestinal) X-Rays

An upper gastrointestinal (UGI) is a test that uses x-rays to look at the esophagus and the stomach. The esophagus is the tube that carries food and drink from the mouth to the stomach. The test also includes the first part of the intestine that carries the food out of the stomach. This test helps to see how well these organs are working.

Your child's Upper GI X-ray is scheduled for (date) _____ at (time) _____ in the Imaging (Radiology) Department at Children's Hospital of Wisconsin. Please stop at a Welcome desk to get a badge and directions to Imaging.

Special preparation

- 0 – 6 months of age. Nothing to eat or drink 3 hours before the test.
- 7 months – 3 years of age. Nothing to eat or drink 4 hours before the test.
- 4 years of age and older. Nothing to eat or drink 6 hours before the test.

Important information

- **It is important that you follow these special instructions.** If your child eats or drinks anything after the times listed above, **the x-ray may be cancelled.**
- If your child had x-rays or other images done somewhere other than Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, please bring copies of the images when your child has their test. This includes CT scans, MRI, Nuclear Medicine tests or Ultrasound.

Before the x-ray

When you come to Imaging someone will greet you. Your child will put on a hospital gown and robe. You and your child will wait in the waiting area. A person skilled in taking x-rays, called a technologist will talk with you and your child about the test. Please be sure to ask any questions you have.

How the x-ray is done

- Your child will drink a thick, flavored liquid called barium.
- A large camera will take pictures of your child as they drink the barium. The camera can see the barium inside the body.
- A doctor who is an expert in taking and reading X-ray pictures will watch the picture on a TV screen. This doctor is called a radiologist.



The test will not hurt your child. Most often it takes about 30 minutes. When it is done, the doctor will check the X-rays while you wait.

Parents: If you wish to stay with your child during the test you must meet the safety guidelines. For example, you cannot have other children with you and you must not be pregnant.

Follow-up care

- Have your child drink plenty of fluids. This will help clean the barium out of your child's bowels.
- The barium from the test will make your child's stool look white or clay colored. This is normal.

Results

The radiologist looks at all films at the end of the test. A report is sent to your child's doctor. The radiologist may need to contact your child's doctor before you leave the hospital. Your doctor will discuss the results with you.

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has:

- A hard time pooping (constipated).
- Special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.