

# Upper Gastrointestinal (GI) Endoscopy explained by Dr. William Matzner

*Upper GI endoscopy is performed to investigate, diagnose, and in some cases, to treat problems of the upper digestive tract. Dr. William L. Matzner explains it.*

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- The gastrointestinal (GI) tract is another name for the digestive tract. In human beings, it extends from the oral cavity to the anus. But, for the sake of studying or understanding, it is divided

into two, and sometimes three, parts. The first part or the upper GI tract consists of the mouth, esophagus, stomach and duodenum (the first part of the small intestine). Dr. [William L. Matzner](#) has published an explanatory article on this issue. The complete article will be published on the

Blog of Dr. Matzner at

<https://drwilliammatzner.blogspot.com>



Upper GI endoscopy is the most widely used procedure for the identification of upper digestive tract problems because of its effectiveness and safety ... complications ... are very rare"

*Dr. William Matzner,  
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The primary purpose of the GI tract is to convert food that we eat into nutrients, which then get absorbed into the blood and supplied to different organs of the body. Any problem, disorder, disease of the GI tract can affect its functioning and may cause malabsorption, diarrhea, constipation, or other health problems.

For patients suffering from any condition that affects the upper GI tract, a doctor may suggest upper GI endoscopy to investigate, diagnose, and in some cases, to treat a problem.

What is Upper GI Endoscopy?

Upper GI endoscopy is a widely used procedure that allows a doctor to visually examine the



The screenshot shows a blog page for Dr. William L. Matzner, MD. The header includes the title "William Matzner, MD starts Blog with information and insights on effective health care management" and a search bar. The main content area features a sub-header with the same title, a brief description of the blog's focus on medical practice management, and a bio for Dr. Matzner, mentioning his experience and education. A "Blog of William L Matzner, MD" section is visible at the bottom of the screenshot.

inner lining of a patient's upper gastrointestinal tract to determine the cause of the specific problems they are experiencing. The process is also called esophagogastroduodenoscopy, EGD, upper endoscopy, or gastroscopy.

### Why Is Upper GI Endoscopy Performed?

As mentioned earlier, the procedure is primarily used to determine the cause of unexplained conditions and symptoms that affect the upper digestive tract. A doctor may suggest upper GI endoscopy for patients experiencing the following problems, without any apparent reason:

- \* Heartburn
- \* Nausea and vomiting
- \* Difficulty in swallowing food
- \* Pain in the chest (not related to the heart) or upper belly area
- \* Bleeding
- \* Unexplained weight loss

Upper GI endoscopy also helps a doctor (a gastroenterologist) in diagnosing the following diseases of the upper digestive tract:

- \* Gastroesophageal reflux disease, commonly known as acid reflux
- \* Ulcer
- \* Precancerous conditions, like Barret's esophagus
- \* Esophageal, gastric, and duodenal cancer
- \* Esophageal varices
- \* Celiac disease
- \* Hiatal hernia
- \* Infections
- \* Inflammation

For the diagnosis of a disease, such as cancer, the doctor may also take a tissue sample from a



Dr William Matzner, Physician and Researcher, California



Dr William L Matzner, medical doctor in California



part of the GI tract for testing.

While it is primarily a diagnostic procedure, it can also be used to treat a few conditions, such as to prevent bleeding in the upper GI tract or to widen the narrowed esophagus, removing a polyp (abnormal tissue growth), or to remove a foreign object that the patient may have mistakenly swallowed, for example children sometimes swallow coins.

### Upper GI Endoscopy Process

In order to examine the GI tract, a tiny camera attached to a long and flexible tube, is inserted from the mouth and is taken through the esophagus and the stomach to the duodenum.

To avoid pain and discomfort, the patient is generally given a sedative intravenously. If deemed necessary, the doctor may also ask for a local anesthetic to be given to the patient. The endoscopy process takes around 15 minutes to half an hour.

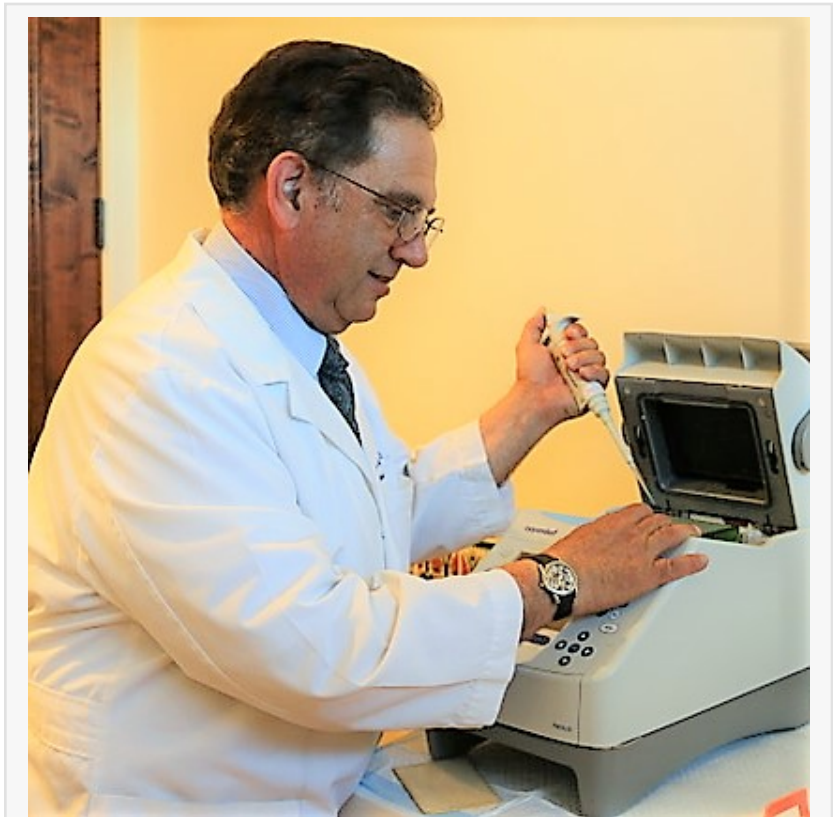
### Are There Any Preconditions For Upper GI Endoscopy?

In order to see the digestive tract properly, patients are generally asked to not eat or drink anything for around 8 hours before the procedure.

### Are There Any Risks of Endoscopy?

While upper GI endoscopy is generally a safe process, some complications may occur in rare cases. At worst, it can cause the following complications:

\* Infection – The risk of infection is only present when endoscopy includes additional procedures



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i.e. something apart from examination and biopsy. However, the infections are not serious and can be easily treated with antibiotics. In cases where a patient is at higher risk of infections, the doctor may prescribe preventive antibiotics before performing the procedure.

- \* Bleeding – Patients undergoing biopsy or treatment of a digestive issue may suffer from bleeding.

- \* Tearing – The risk of tearing of the GI tract is generally very low, but increases a bit in cases where additional procedures are performed as part of endoscopy, such as while performing dilation of the esophagus.

- \* Reaction to sedation – Since everyone's body reacts differently to medicines, some people may develop a reaction to a sedative. However, they are rarely severe.

## Signs of Complications

Following symptoms after the endoscopy could signify a complication, so make sure to immediately tell your doctor if you are experiencing any of them:

- \* Shortness of breath

- \* Fever

- \* Difficulty swallowing

- \* Chest pain

- \* Black, bloody, or dark colored stool

- \* Vomiting, especially if it is like coffee grounds or bloody

- \* Persistent or severe abdominal pain

## How Soon Can You Expect to See Results?

It depends on the reason for which the endoscopy is performed. For example, the patient will be immediately told about the findings if the procedure was performed to identify an ulcer. But, if it is performed to take a tissue sample, the results may take a few days.

## Bottom Line

Upper GI endoscopy is the most widely used procedure for the identification of upper digestive tract problems because of its effectiveness and safety. Although complications do occur in some cases, they are very rare. If your doctor has suggested you to go through the procedure, you can be almost assured that you will not experience any difficulty or complications.

About [William Lee Matzner](#), M.D., PhD, FACP

Dr. [William Matzner](#) works in the area of healthcare economics consulting at Healthcare Analytics, LLC, in California. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Stanford University. He received his M.D. with Honors from Baylor College of Medicine. In 1988, he was the Solomon Scholar for Resident Research at Cedar Sinai Medical Center. Dr. Matzner subsequently was awarded a PhD

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