

GASTROSCOPY

Gastroscopy, also known as *esophagogastroduodenoscopy*, allows the doctor to directly view the lining of the esophagus, stomach, and *duodenum* (upper section of the small intestine) through a flexible fiberoptic scope (*endoscope*). It is used to diagnose causes of bleeding, inflammatory diseases, tumors, ulcers, and other abnormalities. Suspicious areas can be sampled by *biopsy* (removal and study of a small amount of tissue) through the scope.

Procedure:

- A *local anesthetic* (numbing agent) is sprayed into the mouth and throat to help decrease gagging.
- A powerful sedative may be used to help relieve anxiety and decrease movement.
- The endoscope is passed through the mouth, down the esophagus and into the stomach and duodenum.
- The tube, which transmits light and allows the doctor to see the internal structure of various organs, can also be used to suction out secretions, take biopsy samples, and introduce air to expand the stomach for better visualization.

Risks:

- There is a small risk of rupturing or other internal damage to organs or structures.
- Cramps or a sensation of fullness may be experienced as the scope passes through the esophagus and stomach or when air is introduced.
- A sore throat caused by passage of the scope may last for a few days.