



St. Luke's Imaging Services Patient/Family Information

GI Series

What is a GI Series?

A GI (gastrointestinal) Series is an x-ray examination of the upper digestive tract. This includes the esophagus and stomach. An examination of the small intestine, called a "small bowel study," may be included if requested by your doctor. The exam is performed in fluoroscopy and will take approximately 15-30 minutes.

Special Instructions

- Before the exam, please tell your doctor if you are or think you may be pregnant or are nursing.
- Please bring your medication list with you to your exam.
- If you are normally on a special diet, like a diabetic, you should ask your doctor about planning your diet for this procedure.

Preparation

Following the exam preparation will enable your exam to be completed as scheduled. If the preparation is not followed, your exam will need to be rescheduled.

It is important that your stomach be empty in order to have a valid study. No food, fluids (any liquids including water) or medications should be taken after 10 p.m. the evening before the examination. Even a sip of water may cancel your exam. Also, do not chew gum or smoke after midnight. Doing either will affect the results of the exam. If you have questions concerning medications please contact your physician, but you may bring any morning medications with you to take after your exam.

Registration Instructions:

Please arrive 30 minutes prior to your appointment time and register at the West Entrance of St. Luke's Hospital. After registration is complete, the exam will be performed in the Imaging Services Department on the 2nd floor, just off of Elevator A.

What Happens During the Test?

The test will take approximately 15 to 30 minutes but there may be a waiting period following the filming process to determine whether or not additional x-rays are needed.

Seeing the upper digestive area of the body is done by having you drink barium, a thick, chalky liquid. You will also be asked to swallow a crystal-like substance. These crystals form gas or air in the stomach, which helps the stomach show up on x-ray. You will be instructed to lie in various positions on the x-ray table while images are taken. At times, gentle pressure may also be applied to your abdomen to better visualize the stomach and small intestine.

Small Bowel Series:

If your doctor requests this exam, additional time will be needed to do a series of x-rays taken over a period of 1 to 3 hours. The additional time allows the barium to travel through the entire small intestine.

Who interprets the results?

A radiologist, a physician who specializes in the interpretation of x-ray images, will review all the x-rays shortly after the exam is completed. A written report will be sent to your doctor. Your doctor will discuss these results with you. Please allow your physician the time needed to review these results.