

Upper Gastrointestinal Exam (UGI)



www.iowaradiology.com
515-226-9810

What is an Upper Gastrointestinal Exam?

The Upper Gastrointestinal Exam or UGI series looks at the upper and middle sections of the GI tract under fluoroscopy. It consists of a series of x-ray images of the esophagus, stomach and the upper gastrointestinal tract.

CPT Codes

74246 UGI with Air (most common)

74240 UGI no Air

74249 UGI with Air and Small Bowel

74245 UGI no Air with Small Bowel

Indications

The most common use for this medical testing is to look for signs of ulcers, acid reflux disease, uncontrollable vomiting or unexplained blood in the stools, hematochezia or positive fecal occult blood.

Contraindications

bowel or esophageal perforation, bowel obstruction or severe constipation, pregnancy

How Does Your Patient Prepare?

Fast for at least 8 hours. NPO including smoking or chewing gum after midnight.

What Happens During the Test?

The technologist will take a detailed patient history. The patient will be asked to stand in an upright position with the x-ray table tilted up. A technologist will ensure patient comfort as the table changes positions. During the procedure, your patient will take repeated swallows of a barium contrast. The barium contrast will enable the radiologist to show the lining of the stomach and intestines in greater detail. Using fluoroscopy, the radiologist watches the barium pass through the GI tract. Pressure may be applied to the patient's abdominal area.

The UGI typically takes 30 minutes to complete.

After the Test

The patient may resume normal diet and activities after the exam. Barium may cause constipation or possible impaction after the procedure if it is not completely eliminated from the body. Your patient should drink plenty of fluids and eat foods high in fiber to expel the barium from the body. Stools may be lighter in color until all the barium is excreted.

The Results

A radiologist will analyze the images and send a signed report to the referring physician within 1 business day.

(Information adapted from Wikipedia and Dr Paul Keller)

This manual is intended for use as merely a guideline for referring physicians and their staff only. It contains information pertaining to the most commonly ordered exams and indications. However, Iowa Radiology does not recommend any particular examination. Individual radiologist preference or patient circumstances may dictate ordering alternative studies. Although contrast codes are not needed to place an order, the following contrast codes may be used in placing orders: CT Contrast Q9967, MRI contrast A9577 and A9579.