

**ERCP PATIENT
TEACHING SHEET**

What is ERCP?

ERCP stands for endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography. This procedure helps to find the source of pain. It provides clear images of the ducts that lead from the liver, gallbladder, and pancreas to the small intestine. The images will show whether cysts or stones block any of the ducts.

Preparation

Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before the test. If you are having this test done on an outpatient basis you will need someone to drive you home due to the sedation medication you will receive. Someone should also stay with you the first night after the procedure.

* If an illness such as diarrhea, a cold, etc. should develop you should notify your physician, as it may be necessary to reschedule your test.

The Procedure

An IV is started to give you medications. You will be given a sedative and you may receive antibiotics. While you are lying down, your throat will be numbed and a small flexible tube with a camera in it will be placed into your throat that allows an image of the inside of your digestive tract to appear on a video screen. As blockages are located and removed, images are acquired. A contrast agent (x-ray dye) is injected through a catheter that allows the ducts to be visualized on the imaging. Stones can be removed and stents (tubes) may also be placed in narrow places to allow bile to flow out.

Discomfort

A stinging feeling will be felt while the IV is being started. The anesthetic spray to numb your throat may taste bitter. Some patients may experience a gagging sensation when the tube passes the throat area as well as abdominal gas or spasms. You may experience some discomfort while lying on the imaging table.

Length of Procedure

Approximately 1-4 hours.

Post-Procedure

Your physician will discuss findings after the procedure or a return visit may be scheduled. You will be monitored for a couple of hours before you are discharged home. In some cases, it may be necessary to stay overnight for observation.

Possible Risks/Complications

Risks or complications include, but are not limited to:

- pain
- infection
- bleeding
- pancreatitis
- reactions from medications given
- perforation