

ERCP

If you've had pain in your upper abdomen or lost weight without trying, your doctor might want to do a test called E-R-C-P.

E-R-C-P stands for endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography.

E-R-C-P finds and treats problems in your liver, gallbladder, bile ducts, and pancreas. All of these organs help with digestion.

To prepare for your ERCP test, do not eat or drink several hours before the procedure.

You may need to stop taking your medicines before your procedure. Follow all of your doctor's directions.

Also, tell your doctor if you have any allergies, especially to iodine. Iodine is in the special dye used during E-R-C-P.

When it's time for your procedure, you may be given medication to put you to sleep or to control pain or discomfort.

You might get an intravenous line or "IV," which is a thin tube that is placed in a vein. The IV is used to give you fluids and medicines.

Your throat may be numbed with a spray or liquid, and you'll be given a small plastic guard to protect your teeth.

Usually you will be positioned on an exam table on your left side. But, based on your condition, you may be positioned facing down or facing up.

Your doctor will use an endoscope, a long flexible tube with a light and video camera at the end to see inside your body.

The endoscope will go into your mouth. It is then guided through your esophagus, your stomach, and the first part of your small intestine.

A small tube called a catheter is passed through the endoscope.

A special dye is sent through the tube. This is so the ducts and organs can be seen on an x-ray.

The insides of these organs are viewed on a monitor and are checked for any problems by your doctor. The exam might show a gallstone or narrowing of the ducts.

If so, tools can be put through the endo scope to remove a gallstone or fix a blockage.

A tissue sample, called a biopsy, may be taken for further testing.

E-R-C-P takes 30 minutes to 2 hours. After the procedure, you may feel sleepy until the medicine wears off. A family member or friend will need to drive you home.

If any kind of treatment is done during E-R-C-P, such as removing a gallstone, you may need to stay in the hospital overnight.

ERCP

After the procedure, your provider will let you know what they found and how it was treated.

If they took a tissue sample for biopsy, it could take a couple of weeks for results to come back.

If you have questions or concerns about ERCP, talk to your doctor.