

X-ray (upper GI series)

Exam Overview

What is X-ray

The X-ray has been called one of the most significant advances in medical history. It is used in many different ways in medical diagnosis. Routine X-rays involve exposing a body part to a small dose of radiation to produce an image of an internal organ. An X-ray image is produced when a small amount of radiation passes through the body and strikes a sheet of sensitive film placed on the other side of the body. This film is then either placed in a developing machine to produce images much like negatives from a 35-mm camera, or it is digitally stored on a computer.

An upper GI series is a series of X-rays of the esophagus, stomach, and small intestine (upper gastrointestinal, or GI, tract) that are taken after the patient drinks a barium solution. (Barium is a white, chalky substance that outlines the organs on the X-ray.)

Exam Preparation

How to prepare for your X-ray exam (upper GI series)

- Do NOT eat or drink after midnight on the morning of the exam.
- Do not chew gum or smoke after midnight, as these activities can cause stomach secretions, which also may degrade the quality of the images.



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