

**ERCP**  
**(Endoscopic Retrograde Cholangiopancreatography)**

An ERCP is a non-surgical, endoscopic, procedure used to diagnose and treat certain disorders of the liver, bile ducts, pancreas, and gallbladder. ERCP is generally a low risk procedure. During an ERCP, a lighted tube called an endoscope is passed, via the mouth, down the esophagus and through the stomach. The endoscope is passed 6 inches beyond the stomach to the duodenal papilla. The papilla is the opening where the bile ducts and pancreas ducts empty into the small intestine. A small catheter is placed into the ducts. Dye is injected into these ducts and x-rays are taken.

**ERCP** is usually ordered when your doctor suspects:

- Gallstones in the bile duct
- Tumors of the ducts
- Unexplained upper abdominal pain
- To evaluate and abnormal CT scan or x-ray
- After complications of gallbladder surgery
- To evaluate pancreas disorders

**ERCP** is usually a very safe procedure, but like any medical/surgical procedure, complications may arise:

- Pancreatitis - 8-10%
- Bleeding - 1%
- Perforation of the small intestine - rare
- Infection - rare
- Allergic reaction to the dye - rare

Remember, the incidence of complications are low. However, in certain cases, hospitalization or surgery may be necessary after an ERCP. Since x-rays are to be taken, please inform us if you think you may be pregnant.

**REMEMBER:**

- **Nothing to eat or drink after midnight the night before the exam.**
- **You will need a ride home after this exam due to the sedation.**