

Endoscopic Ultrasound

Endoscopic Ultrasound is an endoscopically directed ultrasound that can be used to image thoracic and abdominal organs.

A probe is inserted into the esophagus, stomach and duodenum during an upper endoscopy. It evaluates for pancreatic cancer, gastric cancer, esophageal cancer, as well as benign tumors in the same region. It allows for a biopsy to be taken of any focal lesions found in the upper gastrointestinal tract as well as lymph nodes in the upper chest region. This is done by inserting a needle through the stomach lining into the target. A rectal endoscopic ultrasound can also be done by inserting the probe in the rectum during a lower endoscopy.

The procedure is performed with the patient sedated. The biopsy is obtained by a process called "fine needle aspiration." Organs such as the liver, pancreas and adrenal glands are easily biopsied as are any abnormal lymph nodes. In addition the gastrointestinal wall itself can be imaged to see if it is abnormally thickened suggesting inflammation or malignancy.