



Oesophageal Stenting



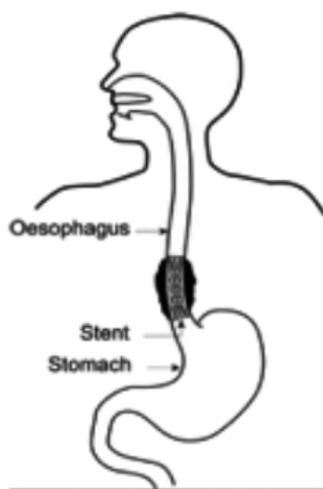
What is an oesophageal stent?

Stents are flexible hollow tubes usually made of a thin metal wire mesh tube in most cases. It is inserted down the oesophagus and through the blockage, where it expands to open up the passage. This allows food to pass through the stent.

What is an oesophageal stenting procedure?

This is a procedure during which the radiologist will insert a stent in your oesophagus.

The oesophagus (gullet) is a hollow, muscular tube which takes food from the mouth down to the stomach. If it becomes blocked by a tumour or narrowed following radiotherapy (stricture) this causes a problem with swallowing. One way of overcoming this problem is by inserting a stent.



How do I prepare for oesophageal stent insertion?

If you are on any medication, kindly inform your referring doctor and the Radiology Department of this. If you are currently taking any blood thinners, this may have to be stopped for 3-5 days prior to the procedure. Your referring doctor will advise you on this.

Do not eat or drink for 6 hours before your procedure. An anaesthetist will be required to sedate you during the procedure.

You will have to admit to the hospital at least 2 hours before your procedure or the day before your procedure.

If you are pregnant or may be pregnant, please inform the doctor or staff before the procedure as the procedure involves radiation.

What happens during an oesophageal stent insertion?

- Procedure will be done in Radiology department. Anaesthetist may be required to give you sedation. A cannula (needle) placed in a vein in your arm, so sedation / painkillers can be given .

- Dentures will be removed, and you will lie on your side on the x-ray table.
- The back of your throat will be sprayed with local anaesthesia. This will numb your throat for the duration of the procedure. When the area is completely numb, the radiologist will pass a fine tube through your mouth, down the oesophagus and through the blockage under fluoroscopy (X-Ray) guidance.
- The sedative will make you feel sleepy. A mouth guard will be placed in your mouth to keep it open during the procedure to allow the radiologist to perform the procedure safely
Throughout the procedure your pulse and blood pressure will be monitored and you will be given extra oxygen through small tubes in your nose.
- A fine tube is passed through your mouth down your oesophagus and through the blockage.
You may gag slightly; this is quite normal and will not interfere with your breathing.
- A wire is then placed through this tube and the tube is removed. The stent is then passed over this wire into the correct position across the blockage and the stent is released to expand.
The wire is then removed leaving the stent in place.

What are the alternatives?

There are only limited alternatives to having a stent placed in the oesophagus, as it is usually done when surgery is not an option. A permanent nasogastric tube is an alternative.

When can I start eating and drinking normally again?

A swallow test under X-ray imaging to check the oesophagus 4 hours post procedure will be done. You will be able to start on fluids within a few hours. It is necessary to have a fairly liquid diet for a few days, until you can start to have soft food. Please make sure that you chew any solid food thoroughly before swallowing.

You may be able to go back to a normal diet after advice from your doctor. If you have increased difficulty in swallowing and breathing, or pain in your chest and/or abdomen, please contact your referring doctor for advice.

What can I eat?

- Once the stent has been placed, it is advisable to start with fluids then build up gradually to a soft diet.
- It is vital to chew your food thoroughly, to make sure it is of a smooth consistency before swallowing.
- If you wear dentures, make sure that they fit well so that you can chew your food.
- Having sips of fluid during meals and at the end will help to keep the stent clean.

- Sit upright at mealtimes and for half an hour afterwards.
- Add sauces, gravy or custard with your meals as this will make your food moist and easier to swallow. Effervescent drink are useful to clean the stent.
- Try to avoid foods that can block the tube during meals.

What if my stent blocks?

If you feel like your stent has become blocked:

- do not panic
- stop eating
- stand upright and take sips of fluid
- if it remains blocked contact your doctor

What are the risks and benefits?

Benefit of this procedure:

1. It is safe and quick
2. It can often remove blockages without the need for surgery.

After stent insertion, most of the people will have an improvement to their swallowing.

Risks and complications:

1. Slight bleeding during the procedure, but this generally stops on its own.
2. Mild to moderate chest pain while the stent 'beds in', although this normally settles within a day or two of the procedure.
3. Some patients get heartburn afterwards and need to take medicine for this.
4. Rarely the stent may slip out of position. If this happens, we may have to repeat the procedure.
5. Extremely rarely, inserting the stent may cause a tear in the oesophagus. This is a serious condition and may need an operation or the insertion of another stent.

The chances of complications depend on where the blockage is in the oesophagus. Blockages nearer the mouth are more likely to cause complications than blockages near the stomach.

X-ray guidance (Fluoroscopy) assists with correct placement of the stent and minimises the risk of complications.

Despite the risks, the procedure is normally safe , and the benefits of the oesophageal stent outweighs its risk.

In addition to the potential risks associated with the procedure, there may be other unpredictable risks including death.

I confirm that I understand the information herein about Oesophageal Stenting as it has been read by me and / or explained to me.

Name: _____

*Passport/NRIC No: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Confirmation given before (Staff's name): _____

Staff's Signature: _____

Date: _____

*Please delete as applicable



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