

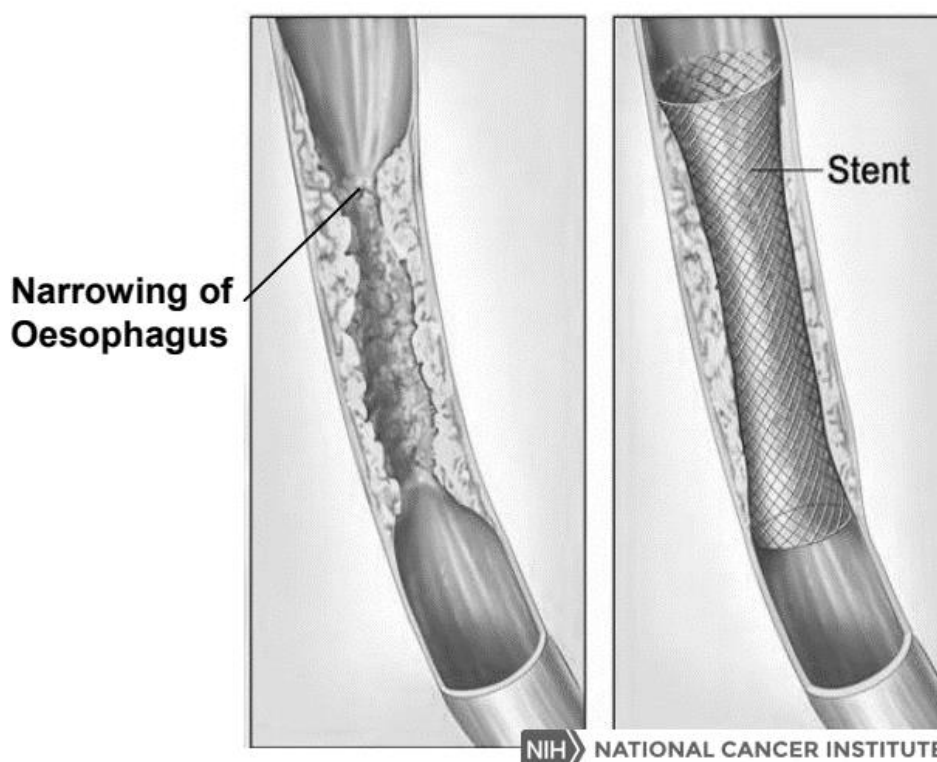
Patient information

Dietary Advice Post-Oesophageal Stent Insertion

Nutrition and Dietetics Department - Therapies

What is an oesophageal stent?

- An oesophageal stent is a narrow metal mesh tube approx. two centimetres wide that is placed through the blockage/narrowing in the oesophagus/ (food pipe).
- The stent gradually expands over a couple of days to keep the narrowed area open. This should enable you to swallow more easily and allow food to pass through to your stomach for digestion and absorption of nutrients.



What to expect after your stent is placed?

Once the stent is placed, the medical team will advise on when it is safe to start eating and drinking. Normally you will start with fluids and gradually build up to a soft diet. It can take a day or two for the stent to fully expand, so take it slowly initially. The stent will not be as wide or as flexible as a normal oesophagus, so you will need to take care with certain foods.

The medical team, dietitian or specialist nurse will let you know how quickly to progress through the following dietary stages:

Stage 1	Fluids only e.g. water, squash, tea, coffee, fruit juices, milk
Stage 2	Smooth or pureed foods e.g. soup (with no lumps), yogurt, ice-cream, custard or jelly
Stage 3	Increase the texture of your diet to a soft consistency as you feel your swallowing becomes easier and your confidence builds

Potential Symptoms associated with your stent

Pain

You may experience discomfort in your chest following stent placement as the stent expands, this usually settles over the course of a few days. Over the counter painkillers, such as soluble/liquid paracetamol suspension, can be helpful. However, if the pain persists contact your doctor, pharmacist or specialist nurse for further advice.

Acid Reflux

This may be a problem, particularly if your stent needs to be placed across the opening between the oesophagus and stomach. An antacid medication e.g. gaviscon or a proton pump inhibitor e.g. omeprazole/lansoprazole may be helpful. If you are not on any of these medications and are experiencing acid reflux, consult your doctor regarding a prescription. Try not to sleep too flat, prop yourself up with pillows or a blanket, or raise the head of the bed. If you continue to experience problems, contact your doctor or specialist nurse.

Swallowing problems

If your ability to swallow does not improve during the first few days following stent placement, despite following the advice in this booklet, it may be because the stent is not in the correct position or has moved. Contact your doctor or nurse specialist for advice.

How should I eat/drink after my stent?

- Always sit upright when eating and drinking.
- If you wear dentures, ensure they fit correctly and that they are worn at all mealtimes.
- Chew your food well and do not rush meals. Try to take twice as long to chew your food than usual.
- Drink plenty of fluids during your meal to ensure that food does not stick.

Are there any foods I should avoid?

The stent has been placed to help you eat as normally as possible. However, it is possible for the stent to become blocked. To minimise the risk of the stent blocking, it is important to think about the foods that you are eating. There are foods that can't be chewed down enough and could block the stent and so should be avoided life long. Please see table on the next page.

Soft Diet

Food Group	Allowed	Avoid
	Once commenced onto soft food options *Foods eaten should be well-cooked and easily mashed using a fork	*Chunky, fibrous and stringy foods could become lodged in your oesophageal stent and block it
Cereals and Breads	Porridge/oat based cereal Soft cereals soaked in milk	Cereals with dried fruit or nuts e.g. Muesli Fresh soft doughy bread/rolls/crusty dry bread or bread/rolls with seeds or grains Toast
Potatoes and Starch Foods	Mashed potato Baked potato without skin Well cooked rice or pasta with a sauce Tinned pasta	Hard chips Roast potatoes Skin on jacket potatoes
Meat, Poultry and Fish	Tender meat (able to be broken up with a fork) + cooked in sauce or gravy Minced meats and poultry Flaked fish in sauce (remove all bones) Poached or steamed fish Breaded sauce if served in a sauce	Tough fibrous, gristly meats large chunks of meat Fish with bones Battered or dry fish Fish skin
Eggs	Scrambled, poached, soft boiled or soufflé omelette	Hard boiled eggs Crispy fried egg whites
Cheese	Grated cheese, cream or cottage cheese Cheese sauces	Any varieties containing nuts or dry/hard fruits
Fruits and Vegetables	Soft well cooked vegetables Soft peeled fruit Stewed or tinned fruit Fruit juice	Raw vegetables Salad items e.g. salad leaves and lettuce Stringy vegetables e.g. celery, green beans Fruit skins, pips or pith e.g. orange, grapefruit, pineapple Raw hard or dried fruits
Snacks	Biscuits dipped in hot drinks Crisps that melt in the mouth e.g. Wotsits, Quavers, Skips Boiled sweets Ice cream and jelly Milk puddings Full fat yoghurts Breadsticks Soft crackers e.g. ritz crackers Cakes	Hard biscuits with dried fruit or nuts Hard crisps Nuts

What can I do if I don't feel hungry?

If you have a poor appetite or have lost some weight, try the following:

- Eat little and often, including snacks between your meals.
- Choose full cream milk and full fat products instead of low-fat products.

- Add sugar to cereals, puddings, and drinks.
- Add grated cheese, cream, butter, dried milk powder to mashed potatoes, soups, sauces and puddings.
- Fortify milk by adding two to four tablespoons of dried milk powder to one pint of milk. Use this for drinks, soups, puddings and sauces.
- Try nourishing drinks e.g. complan build up, supermarket own branded milkshakes or make your own fruit smoothies or milkshakes using ice-cream, yoghurt and fortified milk.

How to prevent the stent from blocking

- Choosing softer foods and avoiding the above foods should help to prevent food from blocking the tube.
- Meals should be small and frequent- aim for five or six small meals rather than three big meals.
- Cut your food into small pieces, take small mouthfuls and chew each mouthful thoroughly.
- Take drinks during and after each meal, they help keep the stent clear. Warm drinks and fizzy drinks are helpful. For some people, fizzy drinks may worsen symptoms of heartburn or acid reflux.
- Don't be afraid to spit out lumps that can't be chewed.
- Have plenty of sauces, gravy, custard or cream with your meals. It will help make your food moist, and easier to swallow and pass through the stent.

What if my stent blocks?

- Try not to panic, the blockage only affects the tube into your stomach, it will not affect your ability to breathe.
- Stop eating, stand up and take few sips of a drink.
- If that does not resolve the problem, try a warm or fizzy drink.
- Walk around.

If it has not cleared after one or two hours, contact your GP or specialist nurse. If it is out of working hours, you may access advice from NHS 111 or your local A&E department.

How do I take my medications?

- Medications should be taken (where possible) in liquid form.
- Crushing medications may cause the stent to block and certain medications should never be opened or crushed.
- Discuss your medications with your pharmacist or GP

Meal Ideas

Breakfast:

- Porridge oats, ready brek made with milk (full fat/fortified) and/or double cream.
- Weetabix, corn flakes, rice krispies, sugar puffs with full fat/fortified milk
- Scrambled or poached eggs
- Full fat thick and creamy yoghurts/fromage frais
- Fruit juices or soft fruits, e.g. stewed apple, melon, pear or mashed banana with full fat milk/cream

Try the following suggestions for nourishing drinks:

- Full fat milk (add four tablespoons of dried milk powder to one pint of full fat milk for extra nourishment).
- Ovaltine, Horlicks or Hot Chocolate.
- Milkshakes – homemade or shop bought.

Lunch or light meal:

If your appetite is small, try the following easy to prepare snacks instead of a cooked meal:

- Soups – try adding full fat milk, cream, cheese or skimmed milk powder for extra nourishment.
- Scrambled eggs, omelettes or pancakes.
- Soft well-cooked pasta, e.g. macaroni.
- Macaroni cheese, lasagne, spaghetti bolognese.
- Jacket potato (no skin) with butter and soft filling e.g. tuna or salmon with mayo, tinned spaghetti, grated cheese, cream cheese.

Main meal

- Tender meat or meat substitute in gravy, e.g. cottage/shepherd's pie/corned beef hash, chicken stew.
- Boneless fish in white or cheese sauce, poached fish, fish pie.
- Soft well cooked pasta dishes e.g. lasagne.
- Soft well-cooked fresh vegetables, frozen or tinned varieties.
- Tender meat or vegetable curry with rice.
- Dahl.
- Mashed potatoes or instant mash.

Ideas for Desserts

- Milky puddings e.g. rice-pudding, custard.
- Sponge pudding and cream, ice-cream or custard.
- Thick and creamy yoghurt.
- Ice-cream.
- Trifle, angel delight, mousse.
- Crème caramel.
- Milky drinks e.g. milky coffee, hot chocolate, Horlicks.
- Soft biscuits or plain, soft cakes.
- Chocolate.

Do I need nutritional supplementation drinks?

Your dietitian may recommend that you include a nutritional supplement drink to try to minimise any weight loss. These are available on prescription from your GP which your dietitian will organise if required.

Name of supplement: _____

Quantity recommended: _____

Where can I go for more help?

If you have any questions about eating with your stent, contact your dietitian, specialist nurse or doctor.

Feedback

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

Further information

RLH Specialist Upper Gastrointestinal (GI) Dietitians:

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Mount Vernon Street

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Tel: 0151 706 4704

Email address: uppergidietitians@liverpoolft.nhs.uk

Aintree Dietitians:

Aintree Hospital

Lower Lane

Liverpool

L9 7AL

Tel: 0151 529 3473

Text phone number: 18001 0151 529 3473

NHS Direct

www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

Phone 0845 4647

Macmillan Cancer Support

www.macmillan.org.uk

Tel: 0808 808 0000

Oesophageal Patients Association

www.opa.org.uk

Tel: 0121 704 9860

Cancer Research UK

www.cancerhelp.org.uk

Tel: 0808 800 4040

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