

**University Hospital South Manchester**

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Review

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# Oesophageal Stents

The Procedure

This leaflet contains information on the oesophageal stent procedure carried out in the hospital's radiology department.

#### Other sources of information:

More information about oesophageal stents can be found on the British Society of Interventional Radiology's website:

<http://www.bsir.org/content/BSIRPage.aspx?pageid=540>

Alternatively, our staff members will be happy to answer any queries or address any concerns you may have, and can be contacted on the numbers listed on the following page.

#### Essential contact numbers:

Your GP

Specialist Nurse

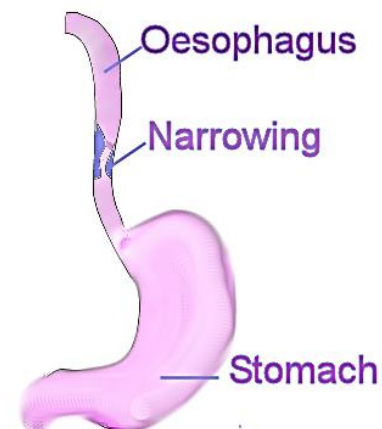
**0161 291 2547**

Dietitian

**0161 291 2701**



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An oesophageal stent is a flexible tube, made of a metal mesh with plastic coating, which can be inserted into the oesophagus to hold it open. An example of what a stent looks like is shown on the following page.

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## What is an oesophageal stent?

When we swallow our food or drink, it goes down a muscular, hollow tube called the oesophagus and into our stomach.

Sometimes, this tube can be narrowed or almost completely blocked off either because of a tumour or scarring, or because of a problem with muscle coordination. As a result, swallowing becomes difficult as food cannot pass through this tube.

## What are the complications of this procedure?

Oesophageal stenting is a very safe procedure. Most of the time, it goes well and there is no problem. However, as with any procedure, there are risks. The health professionals involved in your care are trained to handle these should they

arise. If you have any concerns, please speak to a member of staff.

1. **Bleeding.** You may have some slight bleeding after the procedure. This will usually stop on its own.
2. **Slippage.** The stent may slip out of place, in which case the procedure will have to be repeated. The slipped stent can be taken out during the repeated procedure or on a separate occasion.
3. **Blockage.** The stent may become blocked, either due to food or if the tumour grows over it. If this happens, a further procedure may be required.

A rare but serious complication is the formation of a tear in the oesophagus during the stent procedure. This may delay your discharge home. Rarely, surgery may be needed to correct the tear.

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## What will happen after the procedure?

You will probably still be feeling drowsy after the procedure. You will be wheeled on a mobile bed to the recovery area, where

nurses will monitor you for a few hours to make sure that you are all right. After this, you will be able to have a drink.

## Side effects of the procedure

Immediately after your procedure, you may feel some degree of chest pain. This can be managed with painkillers, which will also be provided to you when you are discharged. The team will monitor you in recovery after the procedure and deal with any discomfort you may have.

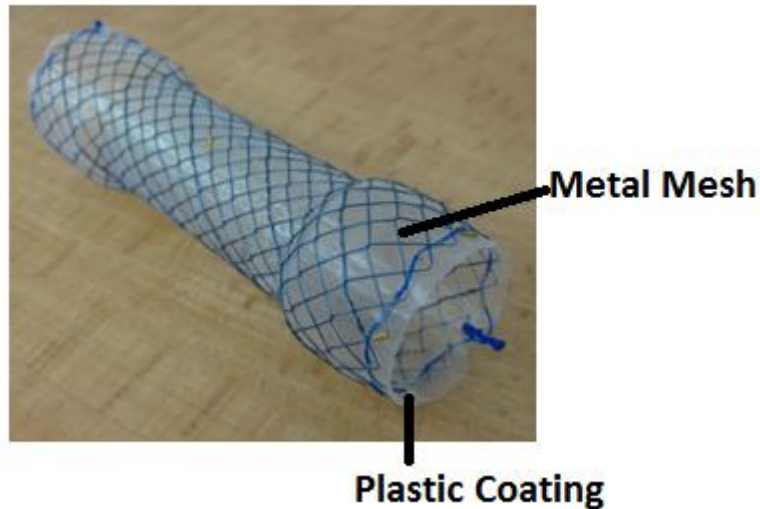
You may also notice some heartburn for the first few weeks. This can be managed with simple medication.

It is not unusual to feel sickly after the procedure.

However, if you have other concerns about your symptoms, please contact your GP.

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## What an oesophageal stent looks like



It varies in length (usually around 10cm), and an appropriately sized tube will be chosen for you. It will help with your swallowing problems

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## How will the stent be inserted?

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The procedure of the stent insertion usually takes about 30 minutes. You will be given a sedative and painkiller intravenously (through a small tube in a vein in your hand). The doctor will also spray the back of your throat with an anaesthetic to numb the area which should make it more comfortable for you.

Once this has happened, a thin but flexible tube will be passed into your oesophagus to the level of the narrowing. An even finer tube (less than a millimetre across) will be passed through the narrowing – this is called the 'guide wire'. This part of the procedure is done under X-ray guidance so that the doctor can see exactly where the stent is needed. With the guide wire in place, the stent is put on a delivery system and moved into place with the help of the guide wire. It will then be released and expand to the required size, and the guide wire will be removed.

This can be an uncomfortable procedure but it should not be painful. If you are in pain, the doctors will be able to provide you with more painkillers.

A nurse will be with you throughout the procedure.

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## Who will carry out the procedure?

The stent procedure is carried out by a radiologist.

Radiologists are doctors who are specially trained in performing and interpreting medical imaging. They also specialise in carrying out certain procedures under the guidance of imaging.

## Where will the procedure take place?

The stent will be inserted in the hospital's X-ray department.

## Can I have someone with me?

You are welcome to have someone accompany you on the wards and in the X-ray department's waiting room.

However, for their safety, we do not usually allow visitors to be present during the procedure itself.