# Oesophageal Stent Insertion

## Interventional Radiology

This leaflet provides information about the procedure, what to expect on the day, the potential risks and important information for afterwards.

Prior to the procedure, you will have a telephone consultation, where you will have the opportunity to ask further questions.

Please note that this leaflet is not meant to replace discussion between you and your doctor. You should raise any questions you may have with the doctor who has referred you or with the doctor who will be performing the procedure.

### What is an oesophageal stent?

An oesophageal stent insertion is a procedure used to treat a narrowing or blockage in the oesophagus (gullet), the tube that carries food from the mouth to the stomach.

A small metal mesh tube (stent) is placed in the oesophagus to hold it open, allowing food and liquids to pass more easily.

The procedure is usually performed using X-ray guidance, often combined with endoscopy (a flexible camera), to accurately position the stent.

Oesophageal stents are most used to relieve difficulty swallowing (dysphagia), often caused by a tumour or narrowing.

### Why do I need an oesophageal stent?

You may be offered an oesophageal stent if you have difficulty swallowing due to a narrowing in your oesophagus.

Symptoms may include:

- Difficulty swallowing food or liquids
- Food getting stuck
- Weight loss
- Regurgitation of food

A stent can help improve swallowing, allowing you to eat and drink more comfortably and improving your quality of life.


**Tel:** 01932 723470 **Email:** asp-tr.ir-referrals@nhs.net

## How do I prepare for an oesophageal stent?

You will have a pre-assessment telephone consultation with a nurse before your admission and may be asked to have blood tests before the procedure.

You should stop eating 6 hours prior the procedure, however you can drink 1 cup of clear water per hour until the procedure starts.

The procedure will take place in the Interventional Radiology (IR), within the Radiology Department at St. Peter's Hospital. When you arrive, you will be given a hospital gown to change into, and a nurse will insert an IV cannula.

The doctor will discuss the procedure with you; answer any questions you may have and ask you to sign a consent form if you are happy to proceed.

The procedure will likely be performed under local anaesthetic. Intravenous pain relief and light sedation may also be given, to ensure you are as comfortable as possible.

If you are feeling unwell closer to the day of the procedure, please let the team know.

## How is an oesophageal stent performed?

You will usually lie on an X-ray table.

The procedure is performed using X-ray guidance, often combined with an endoscope (a flexible camera passed through the mouth into the oesophagus).

A thin tube is guided into the oesophagus, and contrast dye is used to identify the narrowing. A guidewire is passed across the narrowed area.

The stent is then positioned across the narrowing and released. It expands to open the oesophagus and allow food and liquids to pass through.

The procedure usually takes between 30 and 60 minutes.

## What are the potential risks / complications of an oesophageal stent?

Oesophageal stent insertion is a commonly performed and generally safe procedure. However, as with all medical procedures, there are some risks:

**Chest pain or discomfort**
- Common (up to 40-60%)
- Usually occurs after the stent expands
- Typically improves over a few days with pain relief

**Stent migration (movement)**
- Occurs in approximately 10-20% of patients
- May require repositioning or replacement

**Recurrent swallowing difficulty (re-blockage)**
- Occurs in around 10-30% of cases over time
- May be due to tumour growth or food blockage
- Further treatment may be required

**Bleeding**
- Minor bleeding can occur and usually settles without treatment
- Significant bleeding is uncommon (<1-2%)

**Perforation (tear in the oesophagus)**
- Occurs in approximately 1-5% of patients
- This is a serious complication and may require urgent treatment

**Reflux (acid coming back up)**
- Can occur, particularly if the stent is placed near the stomach
- May require medication

**Aspiration (food or fluid entering the airway)**
- Risk is increased in some patients
- Dietary advice is important to reduce this risk

**Infection**
- Uncommon (<1-2%)
- May require antibiotics

**Failure to place the stent**
- In around 5-10% of cases, the stent cannot be safely positioned

**Radiation exposure**
- The procedure uses X-ray guidance
- Radiation dose is kept as low as reasonably achievable

## What happens afterwards?

After the procedure, you will be monitored in a recovery area.

- Your blood pressure, pulse, and comfort will be monitored
- You will gradually be allowed to start drinking fluids
- Your diet will be slowly reintroduced, starting with soft foods

You should:

- Follow dietary advice (soft diet is usually recommended)
- Eat slowly and chew food well
- Drink fluids with meals to help swallowing
- Remain upright when eating and for a short time afterwards

## Seek urgent medical advice if you experience:

- Severe chest pain
- Difficulty breathing
- Vomiting or inability to swallow
- Fever or signs of infection
- Vomiting blood or passing black stools

Follow-up will be arranged with your referring team to monitor your symptoms and ongoing care.

## Further Information

We endeavour to provide an excellent service at all times, but should you have any concerns please, in the first instance, raise these with the Matron, Senior Nurse or Manager on duty. If they cannot resolve your concern, please contact our Patient Experience Team on 01932 723553 or email asp-tr.patient.advice@nhs.net. If you remain concerned, the team can also advise upon how to make a formal complaint.

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## Interventional Radiology

### St Peter's Hospital

**Tel:** 01932 723470

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You can use Text Relay to turn telephone communications into text. Use the Relay UK app on your phone, tablet or PC. You can also use Relay UK via Minicom or Uniphone.

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اگر آپ اس کا اردو زبان میں ترجمہ چاہتے ہیں، تو براہ کرم اس فون نمبر 01932 723553 پر رابطہ کریں

Se precisa de uma tradução por favor contacte: 01932 723553

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