

# Advanced Esophageal Cancer

Jonathan Salo MD

Levine Cancer Institute

Click Right Arrow → to Begin

## Introduction

I'm Dr Jonathan Salo, a GI Cancer Surgeon at the Levine Cancer Institute in Charlotte, North Carolina.

If you're viewing this video, chances are that you or someone close to you has encountered esophageal cancer and is contemplating treatment.

---

For a refresher, esophageal cancer, as it grows, can tend to make it difficult for patients to swallow.

So patients with esophageal cancer fit into two main groups:

- A small group who don't have any difficulty eating that have *early* stage disease
  - Majority of patients who have some difficulty eating or may have weight loss who have *advanced* disease.
- 

Among those with early stage disease, there are two categories:

- Superficial -> Treated without surgery
- Localized -> Treated with surgery alone

For more information about early stage esophageal cancer, there is a link above and in the description.  
Non-obstructing esophageal tumors

---

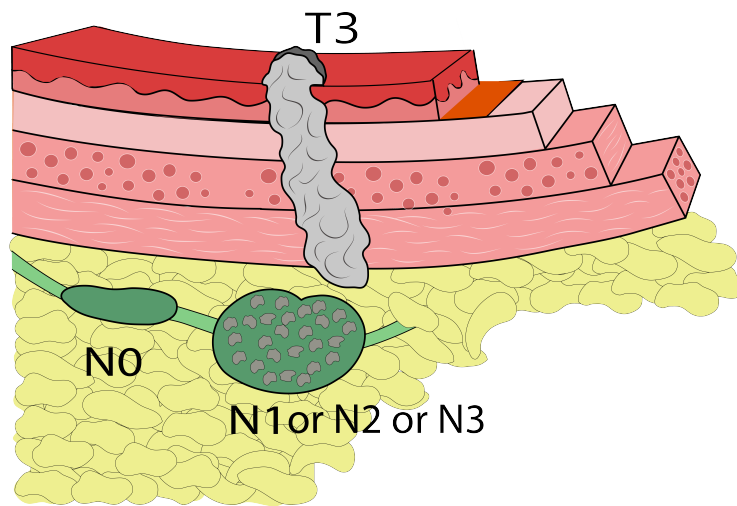
This video will focus on *advanced* esophageal cancer, which consists of two categories: Locally Advanced and Metastatic.

- Locally Advanced -> T3M0
  - Metastatic -> M1
- 

If this terminology is not familiar to you, please refer to our video on Esophageal Cancer Diagnosis and Staging. There is a link above and in the description below.

---

Locally-advanced tumors are usually all T3, meaning that the tumor has grown through the wall of the esophagus *AND* there is no signs of spread to other organs, so they are M0



Metastatic esophageal cancer is a case where there has been spread to other organs such as the liver or lungs. These are considered stage M1.

---

## Staging

The first task with a new diagnosis of esophageal cancer is staging, which is the process of finding out the size of the tumor and whether there is any signs of spread.  
# CT scan

---

Often  
the  
first  
test  
that is  
done  
for  
stag-  
ing is  
a CT  
scan.  
The  
CT  
scan  
will  
show  
whether  
there  
is  
spread  
to the  
liver  
or  
lungs.

---

## PET scan

A PET scan is similar to a CT scan, but it also uses a tracer made from sugar which can light up areas of tumor. From the patient perspective, this is similar to a CT scan. Because the test uses a tracer made from labeled sugar, it is important that your blood sugar level not be too high. For most patients, this means not eating or drinking anything except water for the 4 hours before the scan.

---

## Treatment

For patients with Locally Advanced tumors that are T3 and M0, the usual treatment is a combination of chemotherapy, radiation, and surgery called trimodality therapy. There is a link here for a video that discussed the treatment of Locally Advanced tumors.

Locally Advanced Esophageal Cancer

---

For patients with Metastatic tumors that are M1, the usual treatment is chemotherapy. In most cases, this is given intravenously through a central venous port. Chemotherapy is administered under the care of a Medical Oncologist. Metastatic Esophageal Cancer

---

Once the staging studies are complete, you and your esophageal cancer treatment team can design a treatment plan for you and your cancer.

At the end of this video there will be links to additional videos which address locally-advanced esophageal cancer and metastatic esophageal cancer. This way, if you already know the results of the staging studies,

you can view specific information.

---

I hope you have found this video helpful. These videos and others like it are designed to educate patients and families about esophageal cancer and equip them for their discussions with their esophageal cancer care team. As always, these videos are no substitute for expert medical advice.

---

Feel free to leave a comment or a question, or if you have suggestions for future videos.

If you or a family member have had an encounter with esophageal cancer, I would love to hear about your experience, so please take a minute to leave a comment below.

We're constantly creating new videos, so please subscribe to be notified of new videos when we post them.

---

Here are some additional videos you may find helpful:

Locally Advanced Esophageal Cancer Metastatic Esophageal Cancer

---