



[Home](#) → [Health Topics](#) → Esophagus Disorders

URL of this page: <https://medlineplus.gov/esophagusdisorders.html>

Esophagus Disorders

The esophagus is the muscular tube that carries food and liquids from your mouth to the stomach. You may not be aware of your esophagus until you swallow something too large, too hot, or too cold. You may also notice it when something is wrong. You may feel pain or have trouble swallowing [<https://medlineplus.gov/swallowingdisorders.html>] .

The most common problem with the esophagus is GERD [<https://medlineplus.gov/gerd.html>] (gastroesophageal reflux disease). With GERD, a muscle at the end of your esophagus does not close properly. This allows stomach contents to leak back, or reflux, into the esophagus and irritate it. Over time, GERD can cause damage to the esophagus.

Other problems include heartburn [<https://medlineplus.gov/heartburn.html>] , cancer [<https://medlineplus.gov/esophagealcancer.html>] , and eosinophilic esophagitis [<https://medlineplus.gov/eosinophilicesophagitis.html>] . Doctors may use various tests to make a diagnosis. These include imaging tests, an upper endoscopy, and a biopsy.





Treatment depends on the problem. Some problems get better with over-the-counter medicines or changes in diet. Others may need prescription medicines or surgery.

NIH: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases


Start Here

- Overview of the Esophagus [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/home/digestive-disorders/esophageal-and-swallowing-disorders/overview-of-the-esophagus>] (Merck & Co., Inc.)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/es-us/hogar/trastornos-gastrointestinales/trastornos-esof%C3%A1gicos-y-de-la-degluci%C3%B3n/introducci%C3%B3n-al-es%C3%B3fago>]

Diagnosis and Tests

- Barium Swallow [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/barium-swallow/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/transito-esofagogastroduodenal/>]
- Esophageal pH Test [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/esophageal-ph-test/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/prueba-de-ph-esofagico/>]
- Upper GI Endoscopy [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diagnostic-tests/upper-gi-endoscopy>]  (National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/informacion-de-la-salud/pruebas-diagnosticas/endoscopia-gastrointestinal-superior?dkrd=/health-information/informacion-de-la-salud/pruebas-diagnosticas/endoscopia-esofagogastroduodenal/>]
- Upper GI Series [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diagnostic-tests/upper-gi-series>]  (National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/informacion-de-la-salud/pruebas-diagnosticas/transito-esofagogastroduodenal/>]
- X-Ray Exam: Neck [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/xray-neck.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/xray-neck.html>]

Prevention and Risk Factors

- Esophageal Cancer Prevention [<https://www.cancer.gov/types/esophageal/patient/esophageal-prevention-pdq>]  (National Cancer Institute)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.gov/espanol/tipos/esofago/paciente/prevencion-esofago-pdq#section/all>]



Treatments and Therapies

- Achalasia - series [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100143_1.htm] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/esp_presentations/100143_1.htm]



Related Issues

- Globus [<https://iffgd.org/gi-disorders/upper-gi-disorders/globus/>] (International Foundation for Gastrointestinal Disorders)

Specifics

- Abnormal Propulsion of Food [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/home/digestive-disorders/esophageal-and-swallowing-disorders/abnormal-propulsion-of-food>] (Merck & Co., Inc.)
- Achalasia [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/achalasia/symptoms-causes/syc-20352850?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
- Barrett's Esophagus [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/digestive-diseases/barretts-esophagus>]  (National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases)
- Bile Reflux [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/bile-reflux/symptoms-causes/syc-20370115?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/bile-reflux/symptoms-causes/syc-20370115?p=1>]
- Esophageal Spasms [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/esophageal-spasms/symptoms-causes/syc-20372250?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/esophageal-spasms/symptoms-causes/syc-20372250?p=1>]
- Esophageal Varices [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/esophageal-varices/symptoms-causes/syc-20351538?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/esophageal-varices/symptoms-causes/syc-20351538?p=1>]
- GERD: MedlinePlus Health Topic [<https://medlineplus.gov/gerd.html>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/gerd.html>]

Genetics

- Esophageal atresia/tracheoesophageal fistula: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/esophageal-atresia-tracheoesophageal-fistula>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Triple A syndrome: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/triple-a-syndrome>]  (National Library of Medicine)

Clinical Trials


- ClinicalTrials.gov: Barrett Esophagus [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Barrett+Esophagus%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Esophageal Achalasia [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Esophageal+Achalasia%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Esophageal Diseases [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Esophageal+Diseases%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles


References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Global burden of esophageal diseases: a comprehensive analysis of disease trends... [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40691816]
- Article: Recent advances in machine learning for precision diagnosis and treatment of... [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40575335]
- Article: Esophageal Lichen Planus: a Narrative Review of the Literature. [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40504580]
- Esophagus Disorders -- see more articles [https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Esophageal+Diseases%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+2+Years%22+%5Bdat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+]



Reference Desk

- Your Digestive System and How It Works [https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/digestive-diseases/digestive-system-how-it-works]  (National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases)
Also in Spanish [https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/informacion-de-la-salud/enfermedades-digestivas/aparato-digestivo-funcionamiento]

Find an Expert

- American College of Gastroenterology [https://gi.org]
- ASGE: Find a Doctor [https://www.asge.org/find-a-doctor-results] (American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy)
- Find a Gastroenterologist (GI Doctor) [https://gi.org/patients/find-a-gastroenterologist/] (American College of Gastroenterology)
- Find a SAGES Surgeon [https://www.sages.org/public-search/] (Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons)
- Find an ENT (Ear, Nose, and Throat Specialist) [https://www.enthealth.org/find-ent/] (American Academy of Otolaryngology--Head and Neck Surgery)
- National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases [https://www.niddk.nih.gov] 

Children

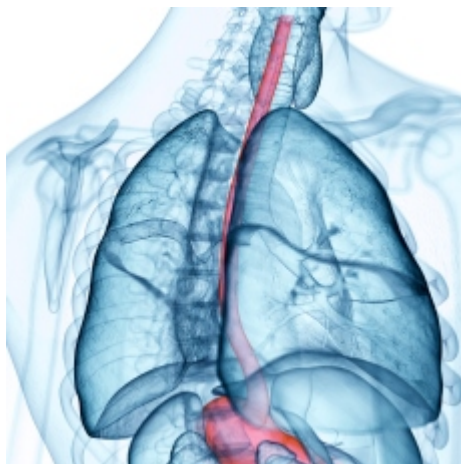
- Esophageal Atresia and Tracheoesophageal Fistula [https://familydoctor.org/condition/esophageal-atresia-and-tracheoesophageal-fistula/?adfree=true] (American Academy of Family Physicians)
Also in Spanish [https://es.familydoctor.org/condicion/atresia-esofagica-y-fistula-traqueoesofagica-es/?adfree=true]
- Reflux in Children: MedlinePlus Health Topic [https://medlineplus.gov/refluxinchildren.html]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/refluxinchildren.html]
- Reflux in Infants: MedlinePlus Health Topic [https://medlineplus.gov/refluxininfants.html]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/refluxininfants.html]
- Tracheoesophageal fistula repair - series [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100103_1.htm] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/esp_presentations/100103_1.htm]

Patient Handouts

- Achalasia [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000267.htm] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000267.htm]
- Barrett esophagus [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001143.htm] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/001143.htm]
- Bleeding esophageal varices [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000268.htm] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000268.htm]
- Diet and eating after esophagectomy [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000294.htm] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000294.htm]
- EGD discharge [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000898.htm] (Medical Encyclopedia)

Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000898.htm>]

- **Esophageal atresia** [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000961.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000961.htm>]
- **Esophageal manometry** [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003884.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003884.htm>]
- **Esophageal perforation** [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000231.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000231.htm>]
- **Esophageal spasm** [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000289.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000289.htm>]
- **Esophageal stricture - benign** [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000207.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000207.htm>]
- **Esophagitis** [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001153.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/001153.htm>]
- **Infectious esophagitis** [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000646.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000646.htm>]
- **Lower esophageal ring** [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000208.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000208.htm>]
- **Mallory-Weiss tear** [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000269.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000269.htm>]
- **Swallowing problems** [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000065.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000065.htm>]
- **Tracheoesophageal fistula and esophageal atresia repair** [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002934.htm>]
(Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/002934.htm>]
- **Upper GI and small bowel series** [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003816.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003816.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

Achalasia [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000267.htm>]

Achalasia - series [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100143_1.htm]

Barrett esophagus [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001143.htm>]

Bleeding esophageal varices [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000268.htm>]

Diet and eating after esophagectomy [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000294.htm>]

EGD discharge [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000898.htm>]

Esophageal atresia [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000961.htm>]

Esophageal culture [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003764.htm>]

Esophageal manometry [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003884.htm>]

Esophageal perforation [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000231.htm>]

Esophageal pH monitoring [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003401.htm>]

Esophageal spasm [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000289.htm>]

Esophageal stricture - benign [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000207.htm>]

Esophagectomy - discharge [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000241.htm>]

Esophagitis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001153.htm>]

Flushable reagent stool blood test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007007.htm>]

Infectious esophagitis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000646.htm>]

Lower esophageal ring [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000208.htm>]

Mallory-Weiss tear [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000269.htm>]

Swallowing problems [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000065.htm>]

Tracheoesophageal fistula and esophageal atresia repair [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002934.htm>]

Tracheoesophageal fistula repair - series [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100103_1.htm]

Upper GI and small bowel series [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003816.htm>]

Related Health Topics

Eosinophilic Esophagitis [<https://medlineplus.gov/eosinophilicesophagitis.html>]

Esophageal Cancer [<https://medlineplus.gov/esophagealcancer.html>]

GERD [<https://medlineplus.gov/gerd.html>]

Swallowing Disorders [<https://medlineplus.gov/swallowingdisorders.html>]

National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Esophagus Disorders* is the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov>]

MedlinePlus links to health information from the National Institutes of Health and other federal government agencies.

MedlinePlus also links to health information from non-government Web sites. See our [disclaimer](https://medlineplus.gov/disclaimers.html)

[<https://medlineplus.gov/disclaimers.html>] about external links and our [quality guidelines](https://medlineplus.gov/criteria.html)

[<https://medlineplus.gov/criteria.html>] .

The information on this site should not be used as a substitute for professional medical care or advice. Contact a health care provider if you have questions about your health.

[Learn how to cite this page](#)

