

Dysphagia (Problem with swallowing)

→Where is the swallowing difficulty coming from?

If heartburn + regurgitation (“food repeats on me”), esp stooping /lying down, **GERD!**
-Most GERD ≠ dysphagia (alarm symptom)!
-GERD → reflux esophagitis → stricture or metaplasia (Barrett’s) → dysplasia → adenocarcinoma

Oropharyngeal

(Immediate swallowing difficulty; in throat)
(difficulty initiating swallow, choking, nasal regurgitation)

Esophageal

(delayed swallowing difficulty; in sternal, lower region; food sticks seconds later/further down)

Neuromuscular/ toxic/metabolic

- Stroke (CVA)
- Myasthenia Gravis
- CNS tumors
- Multiple sclerosis
- Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis
- polymyositis
- Candida (yeast)

Structural

- Foreign body
- enlarged lymph nodes due to tonsillitis/mono
- Tumors
- Zenker’s diverticulum

Functional

- Xerostomia (dry mouth, no saliva)
- Globus hystericus (inflammation or anxiety (somatoform); presents w/out food)

Difficulty with Solids Only: Mechanical obstruction

Difficulty with Solids + liquids: Motor/neuromuscular Disorder

Intermittent

- Schatzki ring
- congenital web

Progressive (worse over time)

Eosinophilic esophagitis
Concentric rings on endoscope and barium contrast; Tx: steroids, PPI

Neoplasm
→Benign (1%) - leiomyoma
→Malignant (99%) - adenocarcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma (age >50, weight loss)

Stricture

Intermittent

- Esophageal spasms (central chest pain, mistaken for heart attacks)

Progressive (worse over time)

- Achalasia (bird’s beak esophagus). (Tx: pneumatic dilation of LES, heller myotomy, botox)
- systemic diseases - rare (scleroderma, diabetic neuropathy – loss of autonomic innervation of LES)

Epiglottitis also presents with dysphagia with drooling