Insertion of an oesophageal stent

Information for patients

This leaflet can be made available in other formats including large print, CD and Braille and in languages other than English, upon request.

As you are having problems with swallowing, your doctor has suggested an oesophageal stent may help to improve this.

This leaflet tells you how the stent is inserted and what you need to do to prepare for it.

What is an oesophageal stent?

A stent is a short length of flexible tubing, usually made of a fine wire mesh. It is guided into position inside the narrowed part of your oesophagus (gullet). It starts out at about the width of a pencil and gently opens up to about the size of a thumb.

Usually it opens on its own, but sometimes the narrowing needs to be dilated (stretched) as well. If dilatation is needed, flexible rods of gradually increasing thickness, or a balloon, are used to stretch the narrowed area. Once the narrowing in your gullet has been opened up with the stent your fluid and food should pass through to your stomach more easily.

A stent remains in position permanently; once it has been in place for more than a few weeks it will be impossible to remove.

What does a stent look like?

Will it hurt?

It should not hurt, but you may have chest or back pain while your stent beds in. This can last for 1 - 2 days. It is important to let your doctor or nurse know if you have any pain, as painkillers can be given.
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How long will I need to stay in hospital?

You should expect to stay in hospital for 1 - 2 days after your procedure, until your doctor is happy you are fully recovered and able to eat and drink comfortably.

What are the benefits, risks and possible complications?

Stent insertion is generally safe and you should notice an improvement in your symptoms 2 – 3 days after your procedure.

As with all medical treatments there are some risks and possible complications.

The risks and any possible complications will be discussed fully before you consent to the procedure.

These include:

- **minor bleeding.** This usually stops without any further treatment. Your blood pressure, pulse and pain level will be checked regularly.

- **aspiration.** Fluid from your stomach can leak into your lungs, affect your breathing and cause an infection. This is one of the reasons why you **must not** eat or drink for 6 hours before the procedure.

- **perforation (hole) in the wall of the oesophagus.** 2 - 7 patients in every 100 having this procedure may suffer a perforation. If this happens you may need to have a special stent inserted or an emergency operation to repair it.

- **the stent slipping out of position.** If this happens the procedure may need to be repeated.

- **blocked stent.** The stent can sometimes get blocked with food. You will be given a leaflet, 'Living with an oesophageal stent', telling you how to prevent this happening and advice on how to try and clear it yourself. If it remains blocked, an endoscopy may be needed to clear it.

Where will I go to have my stent inserted?

You will be given an appointment to come to the University Hospital of North Tees, Endoscopy or X-Ray Department.

How should I prepare for my procedure?

If your appointment is in the morning:

You **must** stop eating 6 hours before your procedure and have nothing to drink after 7.00am.
If your appointment is in the afternoon:

**You must** stop eating 6 hours before your procedure. You should continue to have at least 250mls - 300mls (an average size teacup full) of clear fluids, for example, water, tea or coffee without milk, every hour up to 11.00am, to prevent you becoming dehydrated.

**You must not** have anything to drink after 11.00am.

Take your normal medication, with a small amount of water, at your usual time.

If you are taking Clopidogrel, Rivaroxaban, Apixaban or Dabigatran **you must** contact the Endoscopy unit, as soon as you get your appointment, for advice about taking your medication. If you do not, your procedure may have to be cancelled.

If you are taking Warfarin, **you must** continue to take your Warfarin. **You must** bring your recent INR (International Normalised Ratio) results with you to your appointment. **These results must be within the last 7 days.** If you do not, your procedure may have to be cancelled and rearranged.

If you have diabetes you should contact your diabetic liaison nurse for advice about your medication.

If you are unsure about how to prepare for your procedure please contact the Unit or your specialist nurse for advice. (See contact numbers)

The procedure usually takes about 20 - 30 minutes.

**What can I expect to happen?**

You will be asked to come to either a ward or the unit before your procedure. Your doctor will explain the procedure to you and discuss the risks and possible complications described earlier. This is just to make sure you understand everything before you sign the consent form.

If your procedure is to be carried out in the Endoscopy unit:

- a cannula (fine tube) will be inserted into a vein in the back of your hand or arm using a small fine needle, so we can give you sedation (drug to make you feel comfortable and relaxed). You will not be asleep.

- a local anaesthetic will be sprayed on to the back of your throat to numb the area

- you may be given extra oxygen through a soft plastic tube in your nose
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- your pulse and oxygen levels will be checked by putting a small plastic clip on your finger

- a gastroscope (a long, thin, flexible tube about the thickness of your finger) will be passed through your mouth and guided down into your oesophagus (gullet). The stent is passed down the gastroscope and when your doctor is happy with the position of the stent it is released and will begin to open. The gastroscope is then removed, leaving your stent in place.

- you will stay in the unit until the immediate effects of the sedation have worn off. You will then be transferred to one of the wards.

- you will be discharged home about 1 - 2 days after your procedure when your doctor is happy you are fully recovered and able to eat and drink comfortably.

If your procedure is to be carried out in the X-ray Department:

- you will be taken to the X-ray Department from your ward

- you will not need any sedation

- a local anaesthetic will be sprayed on to the back of your throat to numb the area

- you may be given extra oxygen through a soft plastic tube in your nose

- your pulse and oxygen levels will be checked by putting a small plastic clip in your finger

- a special fine wire will be passed through your mouth, down into your oesophagus (gullet) using x-rays to guide it into the narrowed area. The stent is passed down the wire and when your doctor is happy with the position of the stent it is released and will begin to open. The wire is then removed, leaving your stent in place.

- once the procedure has been completed you will be transferred to one of the wards

- you will be discharged home about 1 - 2 days after the procedure when your doctor is happy you are fully recovered and able to eat and drink comfortably.
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Contact numbers

If you need further advice or have any problems, please contact the appropriate number below:

University Hospital of North Tees

Endoscopy Unit
telephone: 01642 624387
Monday - Friday, 8.00am - 7.00pm

X-ray Department
telephone: 01642 624842
Monday - Friday, 9.00am - 5.00pm

Diabetic Liaison Nurse
telephone: 01642 624618
Monday - Friday, 9.00am - 5.00pm

Upper GI (Gastro-intestinal) Clinical Nurse Specialist
telephone: 01642 383987
Tuesday - Friday, 9.00am - 5.00pm

Non-urgent messages can be left on the answering machine or you can contact the hospital switchboard on 01642 617617 and ask the operator to bleep the Upper GI (Gastro-intestinal) Clinical Nurse Specialist.

Accident and Emergency Department
telephone: 01642 382899
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

University Hospital of Hartlepool

Upper GI (Gastro-intestinal) Clinical Nurse Specialist
telephone: 01642 383987
Tuesday - Friday, 9.00am - 5.00pm

Non-urgent messages can be left on the answering machine or you can contact the hospital switchboard on 01429 266654 and ask the operator to bleep the Upper GI (Gastro-intestinal) Clinical Nurse Specialist.

Diabetic Liaison Nurse
telephone: 01429 522594
Monday - Friday, 9.00am - 5.00pm
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If you have any worries or concerns you should contact your GP during normal surgery hours. Outside surgery hours you should contact your GP's surgery for the Out of Hours Service number.

Further information is available from:

**Oesophageal Patients' Association**
50 High Street
Henley in Arden
Warwickshire
B95 5AN
telephone: 0121 704 9860
Monday - Friday, 9.00am - 3.00pm
e-mail: enquiries@opa.org.uk
or via the website at www.opa.org.uk

**Macmillan Cancer Support**
89 Albert Embankment
London
SE1 7UQ
Freephone: 0808 808 0000
Monday - Friday, 9.00am - 8.00pm
or via the website at www.macmillan.org.uk

**NHS Choices**
telephone: 111 (when it is less urgent than 999)
Calls to this number are free from landlines and mobile phones.
or via the website at www.nhs.uk

**Reference**

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This leaflet has been produced in partnership with patients and carers. All patient leaflets are regularly reviewed, and any suggestions you have as to how it may be improved are extremely valuable. Please write to the Quality Assurance Team, University Hospital of North Tees or email: patientinformation@nth.nhs.uk

Comments, Concerns, Compliments or Complaints

We are continually trying to improve the services we provide.

We want to know what we’re doing well or if there’s anything which we can improve, that’s why the Patient Experience Team is here to help.

Our Patient Experience Team is here to try to resolve your concerns as quickly as possible. If you would like to contact or request a copy of our PET leaflet, please contact:

telephone: 01642 624719
Monday – Friday, 9.00 am – 4.00 pm
Messages can be left on the answering machine and will be picked up throughout the day.

freephone: 0800 092 0084
Mobile: (can use text): 0779 506 1883
Email: patientexperience@nth.nhs.uk

Out of hours if you wish to speak to a senior member of Trust staff, please contact the hospital switchboard who will bleep the appropriate person.

telephone: 01642 617617
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

The Patient Experience Team is available to discuss your concerns in person Monday – Friday, 1.30 pm – 4.30 pm. The office is based on the ground floor at the University Hospital of North Tees.

Data Protection and use of patient information

The Trust has developed a Data Protection Policy in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. All of our staff respect this policy and confidentiality is adhered to at all times. If you require further information please contact the Information Governance Team.

telephone: 01642 833551 or email: information.governance@nth.nhs.uk

University Hospital of North Tees, Hardwick, Stockton-on-Tees. TS19 8PE
University Hospital of Hartlepool, Holdforth Road, Hartlepool. TS24 9AH

Telephone: 01642 617617 Fax: 01642 624089