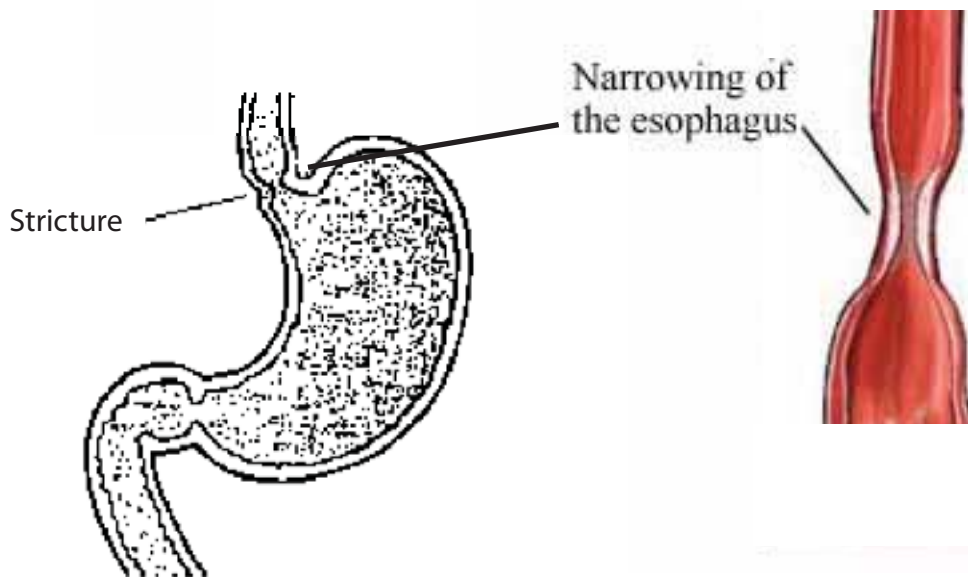


# Esophageal Stricture



## What is esophageal stricture?

An esophageal stricture is a narrowing of the esophagus, which leads to swallowing difficulties. The strictures are caused by scar tissue that builds up in the esophagus. When the lining of the esophagus is damaged, scarring develops. When scarring occurs, the lining of the esophagus becomes rigid. As this scar tissue continues to build up, the esophagus begins to narrow in that area resulting in swallowing difficulties.

One of the conditions that can lead to esophageal strictures is GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease). Acid is refluxed from the stomach up into the esophagus. This causes inflammation in the lower part of the esophagus. Scarring will result after repetitive inflammation and healing. This scarring will produce damaged tissue that narrows the opening of the esophagus.

## Causes and risk factors of esophageal strictures:

- Gastroesophageal reflux (GERD)
- Swallowing corrosive substances
- Infections
- Injuries caused by endoscopes

## Symptoms of Esophageal Strictures

- Trouble swallowing
- Pain swallowing
- A feeling that food is stuck
- Regurgitation of food
- Weight loss

## Diagnosis of Esophageal Strictures

- Barium swallow.
- Endoscopy exam

## Treatment of Esophageal Strictures

- Dilation (Repeated dilation may be necessary)
- Proton pump inhibitors
- Surgical treatment in rare cases

## Complications

- Swallowing difficulties may prevent proper nutrition
- Increased risk of regurgitated food, fluid, or vomit entering the lungs and causing choking or aspiration pneumonia

## Prognosis

After treatment, a patient can usually go back to regular routines and diets. The patient may develop the stricture again in the future.