

OTHER ESOPHAGEAL DISORDERS (979 – 980)

Esophageal Diverticula

- Saclike outpouchings of one or more layers of the esophagus
- Three main areas:
 - Above the upper esophageal sphincter
 - Near esophageal midpoint
 - Above the LES

Typical Symptoms

- Dysphagia
- Regurgitation
- Chronic cough
- Aspiration
- Weight loss
- Tasting sour food and smelling foul odor

Complications

- Malnutrition
- Aspiration
- Perforation

Diagnostics

- Endoscopy or barium studies

Treatment

- No specific treatment for diverticula
- Surgical via endoscopic or open approach
- Diverticulostomy: *most serious complication is perforation of the esophagus*

Esophageal Strictures

- Most common cause: chronic GERD
- Other causes
 - Strong acids or alkalis
 - External beam radiation
 - Surgical anastomosis
 - Trauma such as throat lacerations and gunshot wounds
- Treat with dilation and surgical excision
- Temporary or permanent gastrostomy

Achalasia

- Peristalsis of the lower two thirds of the esophagus is absent
- Pressure in the LES increases along with incomplete relaxation
- Obstruction of the esophagus
- Food and fluid accumulate in lower esophagus

Onset

- Insidious onset

Common Symptoms

- Dysphagia as the most common symptom
- Occurs with both liquids and solids
- Globus sensation and or substernal chest pain immediately after a meal
- Nocturnal regurgitation
- Halitosis
- Inability to eructate (belch)
- Weight loss

Diagnostic Studies

- Barium swallow
- Manometric and endoscopic evaluation

Treatment

- Relieve dysphagia and regurgitation
- Improve esophageal emptying by disrupting LES
- Prevent development of megaesophagus

- Endoscopic pneumatic dilation (repeats often required)
- Heller myotomy: done laparoscopically
- Returns 1 – 2 weeks following the procedure
- Semi-soft diet and eat slowly
- Drink fluids with meals
- Sleep with the head elevated

Medical Therapy

- Less effective than invasive procedures
- Smooth muscle relaxants
 - Nitrates (Isordil)
 - Calcium channel blockers (Procardia) taken sublingually 30 – 45 minutes before meals

 - Side effects include
 - Headache
 - Drug tolerance
 - Short duration of action