

UNDERSTANDING ESOPHAGEAL DIVERTICULUM

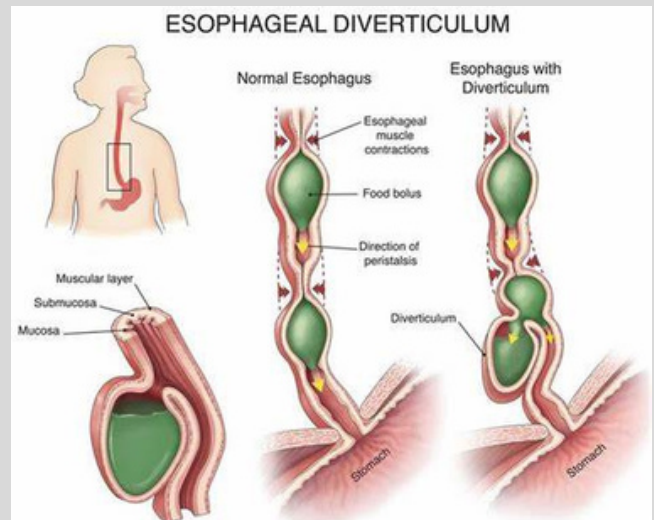
Singaram Gastroenterology | 605-310-2000

WHAT IS ESOPHAGEAL DIVERTICULUM?

A diverticulum is a pocket-like structure that protrudes outward in a weak spot of an organ. When there is multiple diverticulum in one place, it's called diverticula. When this occurs anywhere between the throat and the stomach in the esophageal lining it's called esophageal diverticulum. If there is an infection or inflammation present in the pockets in the throat, it's called esophageal diverticulitis.

There are three types of esophageal diverticula: zenker's, midthoracic, and epiphrenic. These are based on where they are located within the esophagus.

1. Zenker's diverticula are typically located above the esophagus in the back of the throat. These are the most common type.
2. Midthoracic diverticula are located in the mid-chest area.
3. Epiphrenic diverticula are located right above the diaphragm.



SYMPTOMS

- Dysphagia (the feeling of food caught in the throat)
- Pulmonary aspiration (the entry of foreign material into the trachea and lungs)
- Aspiration pneumonia (a lung infection caused by pulmonary aspiration)
- Regurgitation of swallowed food and saliva
- Trouble swallowing
- Heartburn
- Hoarse voice
- Pain when swallowing
- Cough
- Neck pain
- Chest pain
- Weight loss
- Bad breath (halitosis)

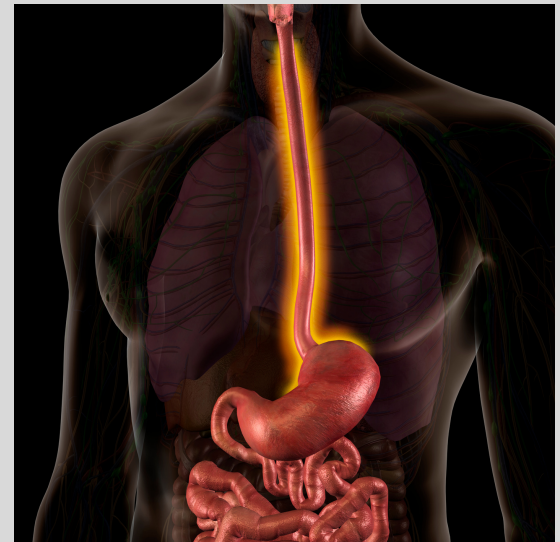
DIAGNOSIS OF ESOPHAGEAL DIVERTICULUM

Esophageal diverticulum can be diagnosed with a few different tests: barium swallow, an upper endoscopy, esophageal manometry, and a 24-h pHmetry. The barium swallow test consists of the patient swallowing a barium preparation liquid and the movement through the esophagus is visible to be evaluated through an X-ray. Getting an upper endoscopy will allow the Doctor to see images of the esophagus to evaluate further. An esophageal manometry is a test that measures the strength and timing of muscular valve relaxations and esophagus contractions. Finally, the 24-h pHmetry checks to see if gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) is present.

TREATMENT

Most patients with esophageal diverticulum don't need medical treatment. Diet and lifestyle changes can help patients with mild to no symptoms. A few things that will help when it comes to managing esophageal diverticulum are eating a bland diet, taking small bites of your food, chewing slowly and completely, drinking water during and after your meals, and sitting upright while eating.

For more information regarding treatment options available for you, **please contact Singaram Gastroenterology at 605-310-2000.**



RESOURCES

MEsophageal Diverticulum Esophageal Diverticulum: Types, Symptoms, Treatments & Surgeries (clevelandclinic.org)

Esophageal Diverticulum: Causes, Symptoms, and Treatments (webmd.com)