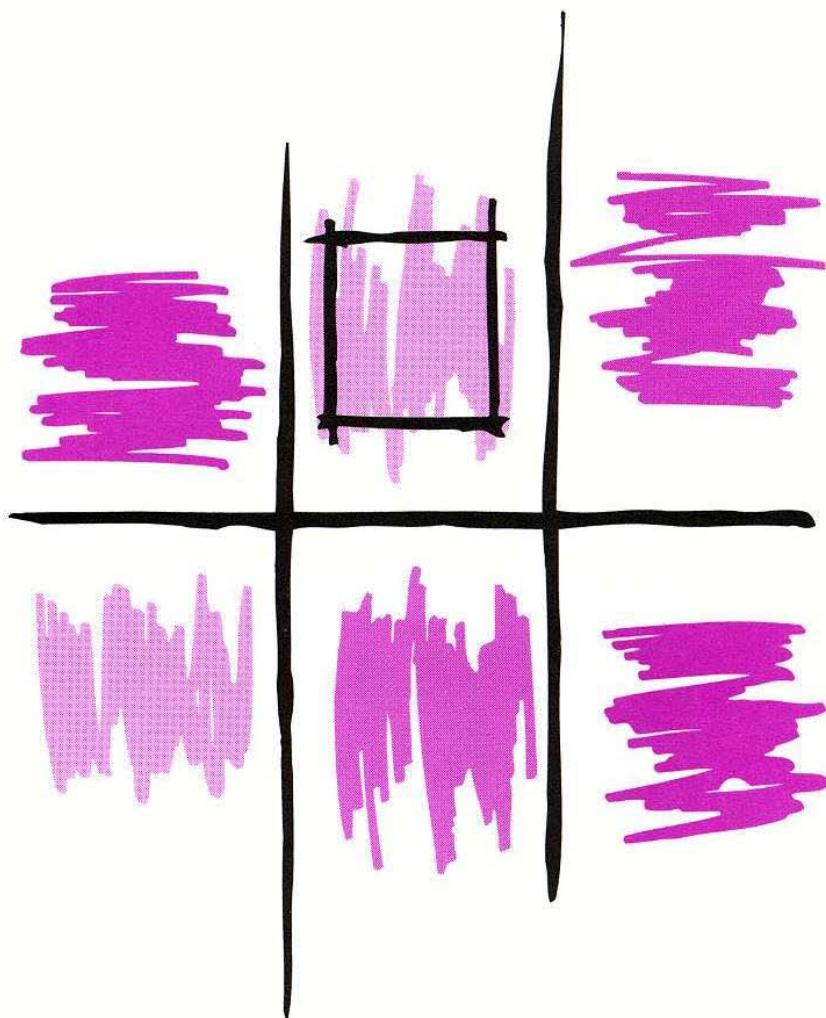


Looking after Your Oesophageal Tube



LOOKING AFTER YOUR OESOPHAGEAL TUBE

A short flexible plastic tube has been placed in the narrowing of your oesophagus (gullet) to help your swallowing. This leaflet has been prepared to help you look after your tube and gain maximum benefit from it. Don't hesitate to ask if you have any questions or worries.

Diet:

You can take any fluid or liquidised food. Some solid foods are allowed, but must be cut up well, and thoroughly chewed. Avoid chunks, and all fibrous, pithy or stringy foods; they can block the tube. Common foods to avoid are: orange and grapefruit segments, celery, fruit skins, rhubarb, tough vegetables, lettuce and coarse cereals such as shredded wheat. All tablets should be broken up or crushed, and taken with fluid.

A talk with the hospital dietician may help you to adjust to your new diet.

Do:

- Eat slowly – don't try to keep up with others.
- Chew your food for twice as long as normal. This reduces the bulk and prevents any blockages in the tube.
- If you have dentures, wear them. If they are uncomfortable see your dentist as soon as possible.
- Sit upright whilst eating; a straight-backed chair will help.
- Drink plenty of water with your food and always have a fizzy drink after every meal, however small (e.g. sparkling mineral water).
- When in bed, always have 2-3 pillows to support you. This will stop acid coming back into your oesophagus from your stomach and causing heartburn. If you do suffer from this, contact your doctor who can prescribe some medicine to help it.

Don't

- Rush any meal, however small
- Swallow any chunks of food
- Continue to eat if food is getting stuck – stand up, take a small fizzy drink and walk about until you feel it clear.
- Struggle on if you are having any problems- get medical help.

Emergencies:

If you suddenly find it difficult to swallow it is likely that your tube has become blocked. Try to clear it by taking sips of a fizzy drink and walking about. If you cannot swallow any liquid for more than a few hours then:

- **Take no more food**
- **Don't be alarmed**
- **Get medical help** – Contact your own doctor, or the specialist team who inserted the tube

Written by Alison Hadley, formerly of the Middlesex Hospital,
in collaboration with the Department of Gastroenterology
at the Middlesex Hospital, and revised in collaboration with
Dr David Carr-Locke, Consultant Gastroenterologist,
formerly of the Department of Gastroenterology,
Leicester Royal Infirmary Trust.

**Published as a
service to medicine by**

KEYMED

suppliers of

OLYMPUS

endoscopy equipment in the UK and Ireland

Printed in UK

KI 5019257/194