

Cancer of the Oesophagus

Cancer of the oesophagus is a disease in which cancerous (malignant) cells are found in the oesophagus. The most common sign of cancer of the oesophagus is difficulty swallowing. The condition is confirmed by a test called endoscopy, where in the doctor looks at the inside of the oesophagus with a thin, lighted tube .If any tissue does not look normal, then a small piece of the tissue is sent for biopsy.

The chance of recovery (prognosis) from cancer of the oesophagus and the choice of treatment for the disease depend on the stage of the cancer (whether it is just in the esophagus or has spread to other places) and the patient's general state of health.

Treatment overview:

- If the tumor is very small and in its early stage, surgery alone may be recommended.
- If the cancer has spread to other areas of the body, such as the liver or brain, chemotherapy or radiation therapy alone will likely be recommended
- For all others, Multimodality Therapy may be recommended. Multimodality is the use of chemotherapy, radiation therapy and surgery in one of several different combinations. Preoperative chemotherapy and radiation therapy are used to shrink the tumor and decrease the chance of cancer cells surviving after surgery. Postoperative chemotherapy and radiation therapy are used to kill any cancer remaining after surgery in order to decrease the chance of tumor regrowth.

Surgical Treatment

Surgical Resection can be done in various ways:

Transabdominal

Transthoracic

Thoraco-laparoscopic (key hole surgery).