



Esophagectomy

An esophagectomy is the surgical removal of the esophagus as a treatment for cancer or high-grade dysplasia. High-grade dysplastic cells are characterized by having abnormal growth patterns and are at risk of becoming cancerous. Because an esophagectomy is a major operation, the patient's condition is carefully evaluated to determine if surgery is a viable option. This procedure is usually performed with laparoscopic and thorascopic instruments.

Your surgeon will make four to five small incisions, and insert tube-like instruments through them. The abdomen will be filled with gas to help the surgeon view the abdominal cavity. A camera will be inserted through one of the tubes to display images on a monitor located in the operating room. Other instruments will be placed through the additional tubes. In this manner, your surgeon will be able to work inside your abdomen without using a larger incision. After exposing the stomach, the upper portion (fundus) will be stapled off and cut from the rest of the stomach.

The second part of the procedure is the thorascopic stage. Instruments will be inserted into the chest to cut the esophagus. After the fundus and lower esophagus are free, both will be removed. To reestablish continuity of the digestive tract, the stomach will be pulled upward to join with the remaining portion of the esophagus.

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