

Barrett's oesophagus and stage 1 adenocarcinoma: monitoring and management

Information for the public

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Barrett's oesophagus: the care you should expect

Barrett's oesophagus develops when stomach acid damages the delicate lining of the oesophagus (the food pipe) and some cells change to become like the cells lining the stomach and bowel. These cells may grow abnormally, and this is called dysplasia. Occasionally these cells become cancerous.

Barrett's oesophagus is more common in men, older people, white people and people who are overweight. The risk of developing cancer is low. Fewer than 1 in 100 people with Barrett's oesophagus get a type of oesophageal cancer called adenocarcinoma each year.

We want this guideline to make a difference to people with Barrett's oesophagus by making sure:

- you are offered an appointment with a healthcare professional after diagnosis to discuss your risk of cancer and how best to control your symptoms
- you are offered regular monitoring of your condition, every 2 to 5 years, with an endoscopy, which involves passing a tube with a camera into the oesophagus so the lining can be examined
- you get a clear summary of any endoscopy results, and advice on how to control your symptoms
- if you have suspected dysplasia or early-stage cancer, the right investigations are used to diagnose it and find out how severe it is
- the most suitable treatment or combinations of treatments are offered based on how severe your dysplasia or cancer is.

Making decisions together

Decisions about treatment and care are best when they are made together. Your health professionals should give you clear information, talk with you about your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns.

To help you make decisions, think about:

- What matters most to you – what do you want to get out of any treatment or care?
- What are you most worried about – are there risks or downsides to the treatment or care that worry you more than others?
- How will the treatment affect your day-to-day life?
- What happens if you don't want to have treatment?

If you need more support to understand the information you are given, tell your health professional.

Read more about [making decisions about your care](#).

Where can I find out more?

The organisations below can give you more advice and support:

- [Heartburn Cancer UK](#)
- [Guts UK](#)
- [Oesophageal Patients Association \(OPA\)](#)

NICE is not responsible for the content of these websites.

To share an experience of care you have received, contact your local [Healthwatch](#).

We wrote this guideline with people who have been affected by Barrett's oesophagus and staff who treat and support them. All the decisions are based on the best research available.

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