



Powered by  Clickability

Health Matters: Esophageal Cancer

Triston Sanders - Medical Anchor

Approximately 13,000 new cases of esophageal cancer are diagnosed each year in the United States. As with many cancers, it is critical to get the right treatment for this type of cancer as early as possible.

In this Health Matters, we take a look at the symptoms and treatments available for esophageal cancer.

The early stages of esophageal cancer usually does not cause symptoms. This is why radiation oncologist David Cho says it is important to see your doctor if you start experiencing problems swallowing.

“You first have trouble swallowing food and then next you have trouble swallowing liquid food or just liquid. Those are really the first signs and symptoms of esophageal cancer.”

Symptoms can also include weight loss, throat pain, hoarseness, chronic cough, history of acid reflux, and vomiting or coughing up blood. Special tests are done to check cancer of the esophagus, like a barium swallow study, but the best test is probably an upper endoscopy.

“A camera is placed down into the throat and looks actually into the esophagus to visualize the cancer and takes a biopsy if it's needed.”

If that biopsy reveals that you do have esophagus cancer, treatment is usually started immediately. There have been many technological advancements for the treatment of this disease.

Dr. Eric Rost says, “Especially with tomotherapy radiation we find that radiation to the esophagus has been very, very successful and we have excellent control over the disease.”

But having control over the disease means finding it as early as possible.

“Where we have a failure is where we find it too late and it's spread to other parts of the body. We can still treat that, but it's a much harder situation to deal with.”

Be sure to talk with your doctor if you are experiencing any symptoms or if you fall into a risk category of this disease, and those risk categories include people who smoke cigarettes, chew tobacco and drink alcohol.

Click on a video link to view this story:

[Low](#)

[Mid](#)

[Hi](#)

Find this article at:

<http://www.wctv6.com/news/features/8/1338276.html>