

Zenker's Diverticulum Repair

What Is Zenker's Diverticulum?

It is a pouch that forms in your pharynx, (an area just above your esophagus or swallowing tube). This happens when there is pressure on your pharynx, and it balloons out. There is a common wall that separates the esophagus from the diverticulum pouch. Food can easily get trapped in the pouch, causing symptoms.

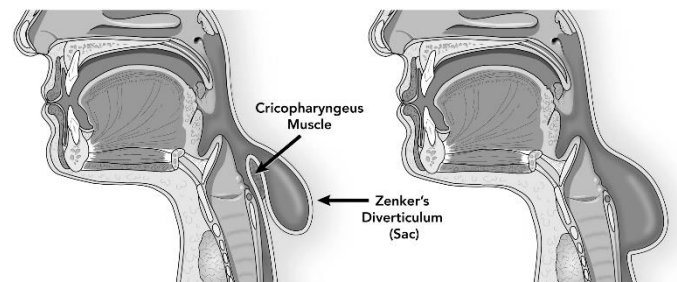
Treatment

Endoscopic repair: This is the most common method. Your surgeon passes an endoscope (a tube with a camera) down your throat. Using a stapler or a laser, the common wall is cut. When you swallow food, it no longer can get trapped in the pouch.

- You may go home the same day or the day after surgery.
- If a laser is used, you may need to have a small feeding tube in your nose for up to 1 week after surgery.
- You may have a test done the day after your surgery to make sure there is no leaking of fluid outside of the swallowing tube (esophagus). This is called a leak study.
- If no leak is found, you will be allowed to start eating. Your doctor will tell you what type of diet to follow and for how long. Most often, your diet will be advanced from a full liquid diet (like water, coffee, shakes, creamed soup) to soft foods (like mashed potatoes, pasta, soups, pudding, scrambled eggs, yogurt and ice cream) over 1-2 weeks. Your surgeon will tell you when you can increase your diet.

Open procedure: The surgeon fixes the pouch through a small cut on the front of your neck.

- You need to stay in the hospital for 1-2 days.
- You may have a small feeding tube in your nose. This may stay in for 1 week to allow the surgery area to heal.
- If you have removable stitches, they would be taken out 1 week after surgery.
- You may have a test done the day after surgery called a leak study. This is to make sure there is no fluid leaking outside of the esophagus. This test is usually repeated in 1 week and then the feeding tube is removed.
- Your doctor will tell you what type of diet to follow.



CP myotomy: The cricopharyngeal muscle is cut. This is a muscle that helps push food down your esophagus and into your stomach. This lets food pass smoothly. It is done with either an open or an endoscopic method.

Restrictions

- Only light activity for a week.
- No lifting more than 25 pounds for a week.
- If you have an open repair, you may shower 48 hours after surgery.
- Do not soak in a bathtub, hot tub or go swimming for at least 2 weeks.
- Keep your head elevated on 2-3 extra pillows the first week.
- Avoid coughing hard or clearing your throat the first week.

Pain

You may notice:

- A sore throat.
- Pain in your ears.
- Pain at your incision site.

Use the pain medicine as prescribed by your surgeon. You will also have a stool softener. This is because narcotics may cause constipation. Do not take Ibuprofen or aspirin for at least 1 week after surgery or until advised by your surgeon.

If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concerns.

When to Call

- **If you have a hard time breathing (go to ER or call 911)**
- If you have signs of a wound infection. These include, fever, redness, swelling, tenderness, pus like drainage
- If you have chest, upper back or neck pain
- If you cough up or vomit blood
- If you have a fever over 101° F

Who to Call

ENT Clinic

Monday- Friday 8:00 am- 5:00 pm

(608) 263-6190

Toll Free- 1-800-323-8942

After hours and weekends, the paging operator answers the clinic number. Ask for the ENT resident on call. The resident will call you at your call back number.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright ©6/2022. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7436.