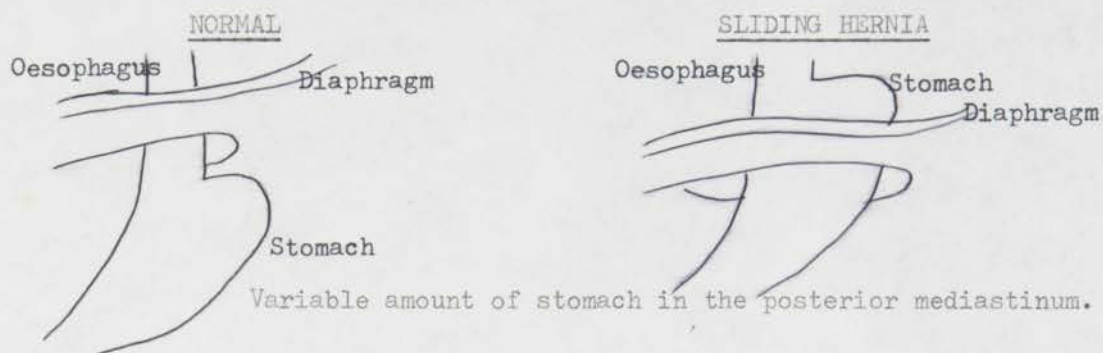


SOME PATHOLOGICAL CONDITIONS OF THE ALIMENTARY TRACT

- 1) **Hiatus Hernia** : an abnormality of the oesophageal hiatus in the diaphragm whereby there is partial herniation of the stomach into the thorax.



- 2) **Oesophagitis**: Reflux of gastric juice in hiatus hernia, causing reflux causing digestion of the epithelium of the oesophagus and subsequent ulceration.
- 3) **Ca. Oesophagus**: Carcinoma occupying the middle third, lower third, then upper third, in order of frequency. Highly malignant. 2% of all cancer deaths.
- 4) **Gastritis**: Inflammation of the mucosal lining of the stomach.
- 5) **Peptic Ulceration**: Mucosal ulceration of the stomach which may be acute or chronic.
- 6) **Ca. Stomach**: A cancer of the pyloric region, or lower curvature. Accounts for 15% of all cancer deaths.
- 7) **Duodenal Ulcer**: Mucosal ulceration of the duodenum which may be acute or chronic.
- 8) **Diverticulitis**: Inflamed, hernial protrusions of the mucosa into the muscular wall of the descending colon.
- 9) **Ulcerative Colitis**: Mucosal ulceration of the colon and rectum.
- 10) **Appendicitis**: Acute inflammation of the appendix.
- 11) **Ca. Colon**: 16% of all deaths from cancer.
Cancer of rectum, pelvic colon, descending colon.

Symptoms and the Alimentary Tract

- 1) **Abdominal Swelling** : the five "F's" -
- i) Fat
 - ii) Flatus (wind)
 - iii) Fluid
 - iv) Faeces
 - v) Foetus

- i) Fat (obesity)
 - ii) Flatus : Beans
Intestinal obstruction with atonic gut.
Gall bladder disease.
 - iii) Fluid : Ascites (a) C.C.F.
(b) Obstruction of the portal vein
20% carcinomatous.
(c) Cirrhosis of the liver.
 - iv) Faeces : Constipation.
 - v) Foetus : Occasionally confused with large ovarian cyst.
- 2) Anorexia : A pathological loss of appetite :
- (a) Anxiety state.
 - (b) Malignant neoplasm, e.g. ca. stomach.
 - (c) T.B.
 - (d) Rheumatoid arthritis.
 - (e) Metabolic disease (uraemia)
 - (f) Endocrine disease; myxoedema.
 - (g) Anorexia nervosa.
- 3) Black stools (due to altered blood) : (Melaema) - not to be confused with stool coloured by iron and charcoal.
- Melaema:
- (i) bleeding gastric and duodenal ulcers.
 - (ii) acute gastric erosion 20
 - (iii) oesophageal varices
- 4) Constipation : the passage of dry, hard stools. A change in bowel habit is important, e.g. may be early sign of ca. colon or rectum. May cause colicky pain and abdominal distension.
- Underlying causes:
- (i) ca. colon or rectum.
 - (ii) myxoedema.
 - (iii) dehydration
 - (iv) faulty eating habits - e.g. high, refined carbohydrates
 - (v) abuse of purgatives
 - ~~(vi)~~
- 5) Diarrhoea : the passage of unformed stools.
- (i) dietary indiscretion
 - (ii) fear
 - (iii) acute anxiety
 - (iv) food poisoning
 - (v) typhoid
 - (vi) digitalis
 - (vii) some antibiotics, e.g. ampicillin
 - (viii) ulcerative colitis
 - (ix) disease of the small intestine, e.g. Crohn's Disease.
 - (x) malabsorption.
 - (xi) thyrotoxicosis.

- 6) Dysphagia : difficulty in swallowing (feeling the food stick)
- (i) Ca.Oesophagus
 - (ii) Goitre
 - (iii) Hiatus hernia
 - (iv) Ca. Stomach
 - (v) Gastro-oesophageal reflux.
 - (vi) Neurological causes.
- 7) Epigastric pain:
- (i) Hiatus hernia
 - (ii) Oesophagitis
 - (iii) Peptic ulceration
 - (iv) Gall Bladder disease, e.g. cholecystitis.
- 8) Generalised abdominal pain:
- (i) Generalised peritonitis - spread of infection from the perforation of an intra-abdominal organ:
 - (a) Appendicitis
 - (b) Peptic Ulcers
 - (c) Ruptured ectopic pregnancy
 - (d) Salpingitis
 - (e) Diverticulitis
 - (f) Cholecystitis
 - (g) Pancreatitis
 - (ii) Intestinal colic :
 - (a) Due to irritation and inflammation -
 - heavy metals, e.g. lead
 - food poisoning
 - Crohn's disease
 - ulcerative colitis
 - (b) Due to mechanical obstruction :
 - strangulated hernia
 - fibrosis secondary to scarring
 - carcinomas or other tumours
 - volvulus
 - intussusception
 - gall-stones
 - faecal impaction.
 - (c) Due to paralytic obstruction :
 - localised peritonitis
 - mesenteric occlusion
 - K⁺ deficiency
 - (iii) Metabolic:
 - Diabetes Mellitus
 - (iv) Neurological:
 - Herpes Zoster
 - (v) Pain referred from other organs :
 - (a) aneurisms of the aorta
 - (b) spine, e.g. osteoarthritis

9) Haematemesis: vomit which contains blood, either fresh or altered ("coffee grounds"):

- (i) chronic peptic ulceration
- (ii) acute gastric erosions
- (iii) oesophageal varices
- (iv) ca. stomach.

10) Indigestion and dyspepsia: vague symptoms associated with eating: of pain; nausea; distension; flatulence; heartburn, etc.

General:

- (i) badly cooked food
- (ii) defective teeth
- (iii) bad eating habits
- (iv) bolting food
- (v) unpleasant environment during meals
- (vi) anxiety, emotional factors.

Local:

- (i) pyloric stenosis
- (ii) chronic peptic ulceration
- (iii) gall-bladder disease
- (iv) hiatus hernia, oesophageal efflux

Other Causes

- (i) angina
- (ii) myocardial infarction
- (iii) diabetes mellitus

11) Lower abdominal pain:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| (i) pleurisy | (vi) urinary tract infection |
| (ii) acute pyelonephritis | (vii) salpingitis |
| (iii) renal colic | (viii) ovarian cyst |
| (iv) acute appendicitis | (ix) other gynaecological causes |
| (v) diverticulitis | e.g. threatened abortion. |

12) Nausea (without vomiting):

- (i) digitalis toxicity
- (ii) congestive cardiac failure
- (iii) renal failure

13) Obesity:

- (i) Cushing's syndrome (pituitary and adrenal tumours)
- (ii) hypogonadism
- (iii) over-eating
- (iv) steroid over-dosage.

14) Pruritis ani: irritation of the anus:

- (i) Mechanical causes -
 - (a) haemorrhoids
 - (b) fissures
 - (c) fistulae
 - (d) diarrhoea

- (ii) Infections -
 - (a) threadworms
 - (b) yeasts - candida albicans
 - (c) fungi
- (iii) Other causes -
 - (a) psychogenic
 - (b) Vitamin A and Vit.B deficiency

(15) Sore Mouth:

- (i) antibiotic therapy
- (ii) dehydration
- (iii) yeast infection - candida albicans
- (iv) leukaemia
- (v) aphthous ulcers

(16) Sore Tongue:

- (i) Vitamin B deficiency
- (ii) B12 deficiency, secondary to pernicious anaemia.

(17) Vomiting:

- (i) varied intracranial pressure
 - (a) headaches - worse in mornings
 - (b) projectile vomiting
 - (c) papilloedema
 - (d) mental change
 - (e) slow pulse
- (ii) travel-sickness (stimulation of the labyrinth)
- (iii) migraine
- (iv) biliary colic
- (v) any severe pain
- (vi) any lesions in the stomach, e.g. peptic ulceration
- (vii) any obstructive lesions of the gut
- (viii) food-poisoning
- (ix) jaundice
- (x) uraemia
- (xi) diabetes mellitus

(18) Weight Loss:

- (i) thyrotoxicosis
- (ii) diabetes mellitus
- (iii) malabsorption
- (iv) anorexia nervosa

Gastrointestinal symptoms due to drugs:

- (1) Digitalis - anorexia, nausea and vomiting.
- (2) Salicylates (aspirin) - G.I. tract bleeding - haematemesis) frank coffee grounds
- (3) Alcohol - G.I. tract bleeding (Alcohol potentiates salicylates which may be taken for the hangover).
- (4) Iron - vomiting, indigestion, nausea.
- (5) Morphia and other opiates - constipation.
- (6) Antacids containing calcium and aluminium - constipation.
- (7) Antibiotics - diarrhoea.