

HPC

Duration-hours / days / weeks / months /years
 Site: where does food get stuck?
 Solids or liquids or both : Solid only (mechanical problem –narrow lumen)
 Both (neuromuscular , motor problem e.g.: Achalasia)
 Nature: progressive-slow (stricture or obstruction) or rapid (cancer) or intermittent (esophageal spasm, rings, webs)
 When does this happen: initiating , after initiating
 Aggravating/relieving factors

Aims of history
 determine whether dysphagia is actually present (i.e. distinct from globus sensation
 establish whether the site of the problem is esophageal or oropharyngeal
 distinguish between a structural and a motor abnormality.

Associated symptoms

- have this sensation without swallowing food? True dysphagia
- feel a lump in your throat? Globus
- feel the food going down when you swallow? Oropharyngeal or esophageal
- Symptoms relieved by repeated swallow: Motor disorders
- need to take a drink after swallowing solids? - To breakdown food may indicate obstruction
- Have to cut food into small pieces?
- Coughing/choking – oropharyngeal dysphagia
- Odynophagia-esophageal inflammation
- Chest pain/discomfort, heartburn
- Regurgitation/reflux/gurgling/spluttering : GERD
- have to vomit occasionally when swallowing? If so, when? Regurgitation
- have too much saliva or phlegm in your throat? Partial obstruction
- have problems swallowing your saliva? Neuromuscular causes/oropharyngeal
- Sensitivity to hot or cold : Motor disorders/spasm

If yes to any of the features above when does it happen: initiation of swallow, immediately after or long after

- Fever
- Halitosis-pharyngeal pouch
- Dysphonia (pain/difficulty speaking) – muscle dystrophy
- Voice hoarseness- mass impinging on recurrent laryngeal nerve
- Speech changes-neuromuscular disorders
- Weight loss – duration, how much weight loss, malignancy
- have to vomit occasionally when swallowing? If so, when? Regurgitation

Associated symptoms (cont)

- have too much saliva or phlegm in your throat? Partial obstruction
- have problems swallowing your saliva? Neuromuscular causes/oropharyngeal
- Sensitivity to hot or cold : Motor disorders/spasm

Alarming feature

- Weight loss
- Bleeding: hematemesis
- Advance age
(often indicates malignancy/cancer)

PH

- Did you have this before?
- Have you ever been admitted to the hospital or came to the hospital for any conditions regarding your throat or neck?
- Any previous surgeries for certain parts of your throat or neck or spine?
- Any long standing diseases related to your muscles or your nerves

HDA

- Are you currently taking any medication?
note: drugs that reduce salivary secretion such as anticholinergics and anti histamine eg. anti emetics
- Do you have any allergies?

FH

- Does anyone in your family have or had something similar?
- Do you know anyone in your family who may have suffered from cancer? or terminal illness

FH

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SH

- Are you married?
- What do you do for work? (radiation exposure)
- Do you smoke? Does anyone at home smoke?
- Do you drink alcohol?
- What does your diet usually consist of? solids, liquids, hot, cold?

Pain while swallowing (ODYNOPHAGIA)

****Symptoms suggest deep inflammation or ulceration of the esophageal wall or intense spasm of the esophagus**

- Infection
- Malignancy
- Cigarette smoking/ Alcohol
- Aspirin/ Non steroidal anti inflammatory drugs (NSAID's)

Socrates/OPQRSTU



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