

What is the Esophagus?

Worksheet

The esophagus is a ~25 cm muscular tube extending from the pharynx (around C6) to the stomach (around T11), divided into cervical, thoracic, and abdominal parts and bounded by the upper and lower esophageal sphincters.

Questions

1. What is the average length of the adult esophagus?
 - A) 15 cm
 - B) 25 cm
 - C) 35 cm
 - D) 45 cm
2. Which sphincter prevents acid reflux from the stomach?
 - A) Pyloric sphincter
 - B) Ileocecal valve
 - C) Upper esophageal sphincter
 - D) Lower esophageal sphincter
3. At what vertebral level does the esophagus pass through the diaphragm?
 - A) T4
 - B) T8
 - C) T10
 - D) T12
4. Which layer covers most of the esophagus instead of a true serosa?
 - A) Mucosa
 - B) Adventitia
 - C) Muscularis externa
 - D) Submucosa
5. An endoscopist notes the scope tip is 15 cm from the incisors. Which structure has it just passed?
6. A patient's esophagus is measured at 24 cm from the UES to the cardia. Which region makes up most of this length?
7. During a chest X-ray, a foreign body is lodged where the esophagus is narrowest, at the level of the aortic arch. At roughly what distance from the incisors is this?
8. Define: How long is the adult esophagus?
9. Define: What are the three anatomical regions of the esophagus?
10. Define: What does the upper esophageal sphincter (UES) do?

Answer Key

1. B) 25 cm - The adult esophagus averages about 25 cm from the pharynx to the stomach.
2. D) Lower esophageal sphincter - The lower esophageal sphincter (LES) sits at the gastroesophageal junction and prevents reflux.
3. C) T10 - The esophageal hiatus is located at the T10 vertebral level.
4. B) Adventitia - Except for its short abdominal segment, the esophagus has an adventitia rather than a peritoneal serosa.
5. The upper esophageal sphincter (cricopharyngeus muscle) is located about 15 cm from the incisors. At 15 cm, the scope has just crossed from the pharynx into the cervical esophagus. Answer: it has just passed the upper esophageal sphincter (UES).
6. The esophagus has cervical (~5 cm), thoracic (~18 cm), and abdominal (~1-2 cm) parts. The thoracic esophagus, running from T1 to T10, contributes the largest share of the total length. Answer: the thoracic esophagus accounts for most of the length.
7. The esophagus has three physiologic constrictions: at the cricopharyngeus (~15 cm), the aortic arch/left bronchus crossing (~25 cm), and the diaphragmatic hiatus (~40 cm). A foreign body at the aortic arch level is lodged at the second constriction. Answer: approximately 25 cm from the incisors.
8. About 25 cm (10 inches), running from the pharynx (~C6) to the stomach (~T11).
9. Cervical, thoracic, and abdominal.
10. It stays closed between swallows to keep air out of the esophagus and opens during swallowing.

Bounlu

All cards, step-by-step solutions and an AI tutor are in the Notek app.
Promy turns exam dates into automatic reminders.