

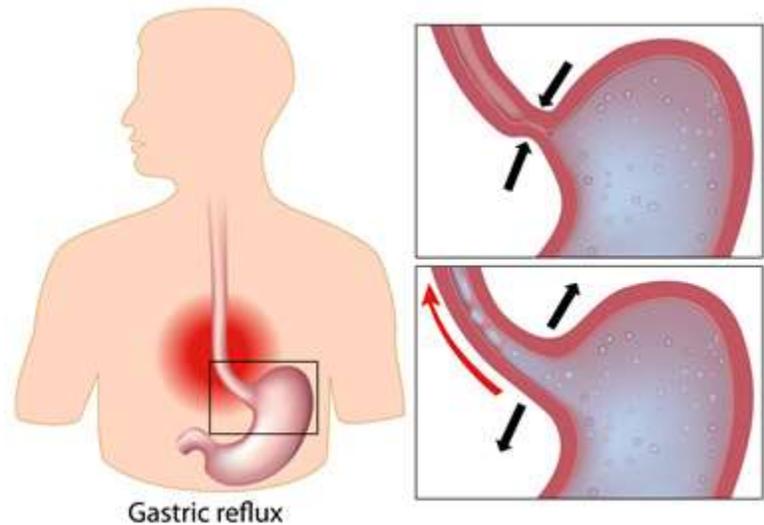
# Radiofrequency Ablation Therapy for Barrett's Esophagus

## What is Barrett's Esophagus

Barrett's esophagus (BE) or intestinal metaplasia (IM) is a change in the epithelial lining of the esophagus. BE is believed to develop primarily as a result of chronic exposure of the esophagus to refluxed stomach acid.

Chronic exposure of the esophagus to refluxed stomach acid, and other, as of yet unknown factors, result in recurrent mucosal injury. Such injury is accompanied by inflammation,

and ultimately a cellular change (metaplasia) to a specialized columnar epithelium. Some patients with Barrett's esophagus may additionally develop additional, precancerous changes called dysplasia. Over time, a small percentage of patients with Barrett's esophagus may develop esophageal cancer. Your doctor may recommend RFA to treat Barrett's esophagus with dysplasia (low-grade or high-grade), to lower the risk of esophageal cancer.



## Radiofrequency Ablation (RFA) Therapy

Radiofrequency ablation (RFA) therapy has been shown to be safe and effective for treating Barrett's esophagus complicated by dysplasia. Radiofrequency energy (radio waves) is delivered via a catheter to the esophagus to remove diseased tissue while minimizing injury to healthy esophagus tissue. This is called ablation, which means the removal or destruction of abnormal tissue.

While you are sedated, a device is inserted through the mouth into the esophagus and used to deliver a controlled level of energy and power to remove a thin layer of diseased tissue. The ability to provide a controlled amount of heat to diseased tissue is one mechanism by which this therapy has a lower rate of complications than other forms of ablation therapy.

Larger areas of Barrett's tissue are treated with a balloon-mounted catheter. Smaller areas are treated with an endoscope-mounted catheter. Both are introduced during an upper GI endoscopy procedure, which is a thin, flexible tube inserted through a patient's mouth.

## **After The Procedure - Recovery**

The radiofrequency ablation procedure takes about 15 to 30 to perform. You may experience chest discomfort, pain, and difficulty swallowing for several days after the procedure. These symptoms can all be managed with medications and will usually go away within 3 to 4 days. Your doctor will prescribe antacid medications to help the healing of the esophagus. For most people, healthy tissue replaces the diseased tissue within 3 or 4 weeks. Contact your physician immediately if you experience any of the following after the procedure:

- 1) Significant chest pain
- 2) Difficulty swallowing
- 3) Fever
- 4) Bleeding
- 5) Abdominal pain
- 6) Difficulty breathing
- 7) Vomiting