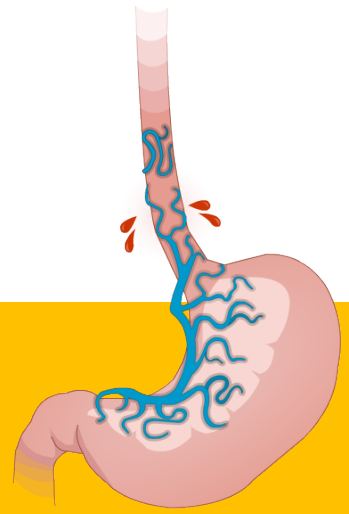


Varices

enlarged veins



When to get medical attention:

Go to the nearest emergency department, or have someone call 911 if you have signs that varices may have started to bleed:

- if you are vomiting blood or something that looks like coffee grounds
- if you have black or tar like bowel movements.

What are varices?

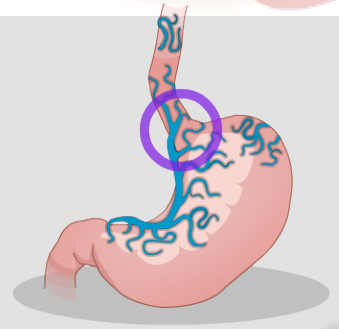
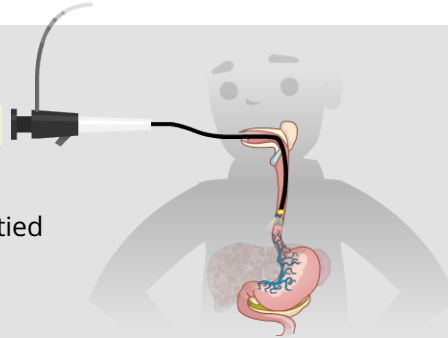
When pressure in the portal vein gets too high, it can cause pressure to rise in other blood vessels. This can make the veins in your esophagus (food pipe), and stomach swell. These swollen veins are called varices. In some cases, these veins can get so swollen that they burst open and bleed. This bleeding can be life-threatening. After varices have bled once, there's a high risk of them bleeding again.



Treatment:

1. Upper Endoscopy (Gastroscopy):

An upper endoscopy involves inserting a tiny camera through your mouth to look down into your esophagus and into your stomach. If you have varices, they can be tied off with tiny rubber bands during the procedure (called banding).



2. Medications:

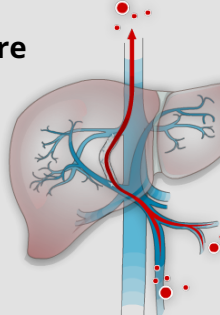
Non-selective beta blocker medicines (carvedilol, nadolol, and propranolol) are used to prevent an episode of variceal bleeding by lowering the pressure in the enlarged veins (varices). Non-selective beta blockers have been shown to reduce the risk of having a first episode of bleeding. They also reduce risk of rebleeding in people who have had a variceal bleed before.

If you are on a non-selective beta blocker medication:

- Check your blood pressure and pulse 2 to 3 times per week. Rest for at least five minutes before you check these measurements. Record your measurements
 - **Let your Primary Care Provider or liver specialist know if:**
 - Your pulse is 50 beats per minute or less.
 - The first (or top) number of your blood pressure is lower than 90.
 - You are dizzy, lightheaded or fall.
- If you have any of these, do not take your next dose of non-selective beta blockers.

3. TIPS (A shunt used to decrease pressure in the portal vein):

In more severe cases, a TIPS procedure may be needed to prevent bleeding. This is a procedure done by an interventional radiologist in a specialized hospital



Getting started:

- Check your poop daily for signs of bleeding
- Take your non-selective beta blocker as prescribed



 **Scan to view videos on:**

Varices, Upper Endoscopy,
Non-selective beta blockers and
TIPS procedure