

# ***Catherine Street Medical Centre***

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## **OESOPHAGEAL CANCER**

### **FACTS**

- There are 400 new cases of oesophageal cancer in Ireland each year.
- Prognosis is poor with 90% of patients dying of their cancer.
- Early diagnosis allows more successful treatment.

The main symptoms are – recent swallow difficulty / unexplained weight loss.

### **RISK FACTORS**

- Age – more likely > 60 years .
- Gender – more common in men but incidence in women is increasing.
- Heart burn – a long history.
- Barrett's long term acid-reflux – increases risk of adenocarcinoma .
- Obesity – more common.
- Tobacco use – a major risk factor for squamous cell cancer.
- Alcohol use – excess use especially associated with squamous cell cancer

There are of course other warning signs eg persistent vomiting, unexplained anaemia ..... but in essence if one is concerned urgent GP review is advised with a view to Gastroscopy and Biopsy.