

Schatzki Ring

What is a Schatzki Ring?

A Schatzki ring is a smooth, non-cancerous, ring of tissue in the lower end of the esophagus (the muscular tube that passes food from the mouth to the stomach). The Schatzki ring can cause a narrowing of the esophagus.

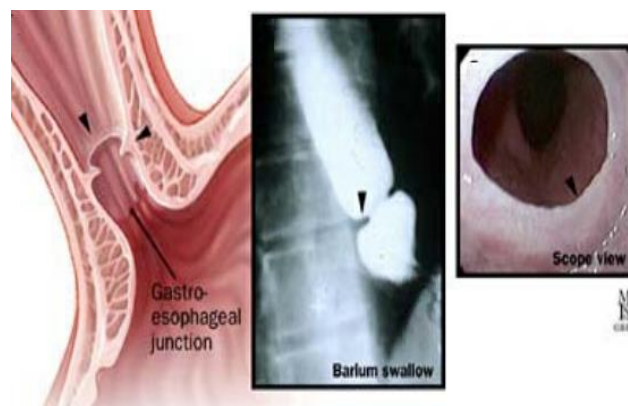
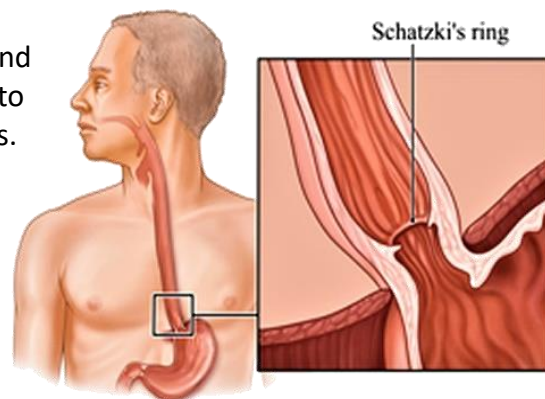
Symptoms

The majority of people with a Schatzki ring do not experience any symptoms. For those that do, they may experience difficulty swallowing solid foods (may come and go) and/or may feel a sensation of food being caught in the throat or chest.

How Is This Condition Diagnosed?

Your Gastroenterologist will likely do a physical examination and may conduct an examination to evaluate your condition such as:

- A Barium Swallow study where X-rays are taken while you drink a barium solution or swallow barium-coated food or a pill. These X-rays allow the doctor to see how your esophagus works and see if there are blockages there.
- An endoscopy procedure where a doctor inserts a narrow tube containing a camera through your mouth and into your esophagus. The camera sends images that help the doctor to see whether there are any obstructions, such as a Schatzki ring.



What Is the Treatment for a Schatzki Ring?

The treatment of your Schatzki ring will depend on your symptoms. Treatment is not always necessary if a person experiences no symptoms. Many people avoid symptoms by chewing food thoroughly and taking sips of water between bites. Because many people with Schatzki rings also experience gastro-esophageal reflux disease (GERD), medications to reduce stomach acids may be prescribed and you may be advised to avoid alcohol, tobacco, and caffeine, which can irritate the esophagus.

Your doctor may recommend an endoscopy procedure to widen the Schatzki ring, such as inserting a tiny balloon into the esophagus and inflating it or inserting a flexible blunt-tipped instrument called a 'bougie' into the Schatzki ring to dilate it. In rare cases, a doctor may recommend surgery. It's important for you to discuss your condition with your physician to learn more about what options may be best for you.