
4.8. Radiofrequency ablation of Barrett's esophagus

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Introduction: Barrett's esophagus (BE) is known to be due to chronic gastroesophageal reflux disease and is a precursor of esophageal adenocarcinoma.

Discussion: The ability to eliminate BE is appealing, given the neoplastic potential of this condition and the continued increase in incidence of adenocarcinoma involving the esophagus and esophagogastric junction, a highly lethal disease. While a number of endoscopic technologies targeting metaplastic or neoplastic esophageal mucosa have been introduced into the clinical marketplace, most have not been widely adopted. Radiofrequency ablation recently was developed and holds appeal as a reliable, minimally invasive, inexpensive, and well-tolerated technique to destroy pathologic esophageal epithelium.

Conclusion: The available data show its efficacy and safety in the short-term, though more mature follow-up is needed to demonstrate its durability in the long-term and its cost-effectiveness in ultimately saving lives.