Hiatus Hernia

A condition in which a portion of the stomach protrudes through the diaphragmatic hiatus.
This is the view from the back of our ship

- Cause is unknown
- Obesity and smoking increases the risk of developing hiatus herniae
- Can occur from birth as congenital hiatus hernia
- Usually associated with gastro-oesophageal reflux in infants
Hiatus Hernia

• A common condition

• Most prevalent in people over 50 years old

• May be classified as rolling or sliding hiatus hernia
Symptoms

• Many are asymptomatic
• Retro-sternal pain, usually worse on bending and lying flat
• Dysphagia
• Chest Pain
• Belching
Investigations

- Barium Swallow
- Endoscopic investigation

- Picture shows protrusion of the stomach above the diaphragm
Treatment

- Aims of treatment are to relieve symptoms and to prevent complications developing.
- Drug therapy is used to limit oesophageal irritation by gastric secretions.
- Medications may include antacids, H₂ antagonists and proton pump inhibitors or drugs that strengthen the cardiac sphincter.
Acid Reducing Drugs

- \(H_2\) Antagonists include Tagamet (Cimetidine), Zantac (Ranitidine), Pepcid (Famotidine) & Axid (Nizatidine)
- These drugs block the histamine receptors sites that promote HCl secretion
- They are usually well tolerated
- Side effects may include headache, dizziness, rash, diarrhoea, decreased libido and sexual impairment
Acid Reducing Drugs

- Antacids are tablets made from alkaline salts which neutralise the acid within gastric secretion.
- These may include calcium carbonate, Aluminium salts, Magnesium salts and Sodium citrate.
- Side effects may include constipation, hypercalcaemia, hypermagnesaemia, haemorrhoids, diarrhoea & vomiting.
Acid Reducing Drugs

• Proton pump inhibitors stop the secretion of HCl into gastric secretions.

• Most common forms of this type of drug is
  – Omeprazole (Prilosec)
  – Lansoprazole (Prevacid)

Side effects are rare but may include constipation
Treatment Continued

• Lifestyle changes can be made to limit the symptoms of hiatus hernia, these can include:
  • Avoidance of large or heavy meals
  • Never lie or bend down after a meal
  • Weight Reduction
  • Stop Smoking
  • Raise the head of the bed
Treatment & Prognosis

- Failure to control the symptoms with drug therapy may necessitate surgical repair of the hiatus hernia.
- Most symptoms are alleviated with treatment.
Complications

- Gastro-intestinal bleeding, usually slow
- Iron Deficient Anaemia
- Aspirational Pneumonia
- Strangulation of hernia
Barrett’s oesophagus
Candida