

## Esophageal Varices

Esophageal varices are enlarged or swollen veins on the lining of the esophagus that are prone to bleeding. They are life threatening, and can be fatal in up to 50% of patients. They usually appear as a result of *portal hypertension* (high pressure in the veins that drain blood from the esophagus and stomach in patients with severe liver disease.)



This is an endoscopic view of esophageal varices in a 26 year old male with alcoholic [cirrhosis](#) of the liver.