

Esophagus

Esophagus • The part of the gastrointestinal tract called the esophagus is a muscular tube whose function is to transport foodstuffs from the mouth to the stomach and to prevent the retrograde flow of gastric contents. • Transport is achieved by peristaltic contractions and relaxation of the esophageal sphincters (upper and lower), usually controlled by reflexes and by the autonomic nervous system. • In humans the esophagus is covered by nonkeratinized stratified squamous epithelium. • In general, it has the same layers as the rest of the digestive tract. In the submucosa are groups of small mucus-secreting glands, the esophageal glands, whose secretion facilitates the transport of foodstuffs and protects the mucosa .

Histological Structure. The esophagus has four coats: an external or fibrous coat a muscular coat a submucous or areolar coat and an internal or mucous coat. ☐The muscular coat (tunica muscularis) isble thickness: ☐an external of longitudinal and an internal of circular fibers. ☐ The muscular fibers in the upper part of the esophagus are a red color, and consist chiefly of the striped variety; but below they consist for the most part of involuntary fibers.