Iatrogenic esophageal perforation caused by insertion of a gastric tube during a fundoplication operation is a severe and rare intraoperative complication. A 64-year-old woman underwent laparoscopic Nissen fundoplication. Intraoperatively, a large-bore gastric tube was inserted as a placeholder for the esophageal lumen. At 5 days after the procedure, increasing inflammation parameters and thoracic pain led to endoscopic examination.

At 5 cm from the oral side of the gastroesophageal junction, we found a transmural defect of 1.5 cm in diameter (Fig. 1a). The perforation opened into an extraluminal cavity filled with salvia and food (Fig. 1b), which was removed endoscopically. For intracavitary endoscopic negative pressure therapy (ENPT) [1–3], open-pore polyurethane foam drainage (OPD; Endo-SPONGE; B. Braun Melsungen AG, Melsungen, Germany), 1.5 cm in diameter and 4 cm in length was fixed with a suture to the tip of a gastric tube (Ventrol, 12 Ch × 120 cm; Covidien Argyle, Dublin, Ireland). The foam was inserted using endoscopic forceps and pushed into the cavity through the defect. The tube was led out nasally, and negative pressure was applied using an electronic pump (KCI Activac; –125 mmHg, continuous, highest intensity). Suction resulted in drainage and collapse of the cavity and closure of the defect (Fig. 2, Video 1).
ENPT was continued for 12 days in total. Drainage was renewed four times, in an interval of 1–3 days. At the first exchange after 3 days, we found that the foam was blocked with mucous secretions (Fig. 3). We subsequently reduced the exchange interval. After 10 days of intracavitary ENPT, the shrunken cavity was filled with granulation tissue (Fig. 4).

The final period of ENPT was done within the esophageal lumen (intraluminal ENPT) using a double-lumen open-pore film drainage (OFD) [4, 5]. OFD was built with a Trilumina tube (Freka Trelumina, CH/Fr 16/9, 150cm; Fresenius Kabi AG, Bad Homburg, Germany) and a thin, double-layered, open-pore film (Suprasorb CNP, Drainage Film; Lohmann & Rauscher International, Rengsdorf Germany) [5].

The end of ENPT, enteral nutrition was started with a soft diet. At follow-up endoscopy 64 days after the end of ENPT, we observed complete healing and a small scar.

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Competing interests

Dr. Loske is a consultant for Lohmann & Rauscher GmbH & Co.KG.

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