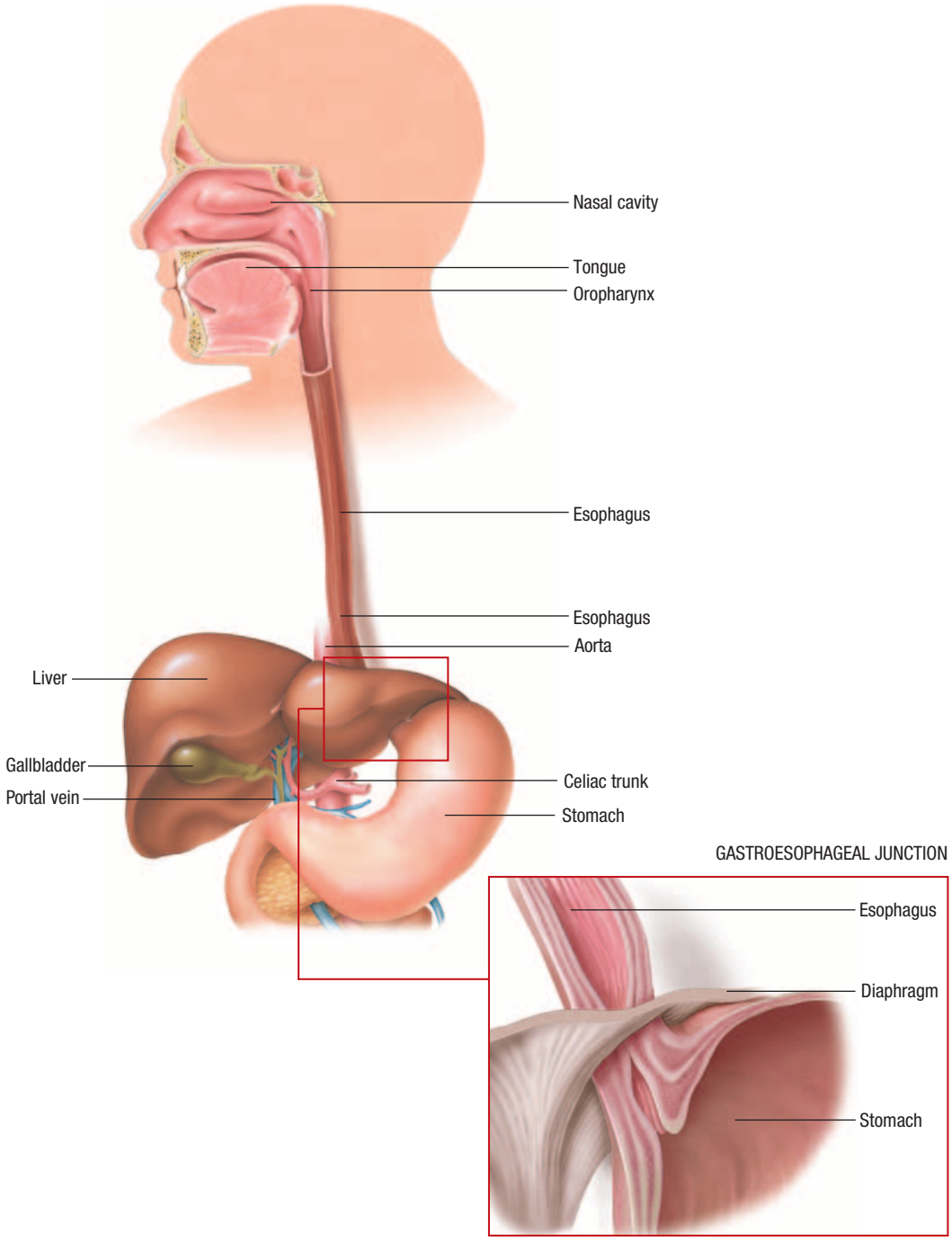

figure 38-2 Gastroesophageal junction. (Source: Anatomical Chart Company: Atlas of Human Anatomy, p 203. Springhouse, PA, Springhouse, 2001.)

gastroesophageal junction, prevents reflux of gastric contents into the esophagus.

The stomach is a flask-shaped organ that lies in the upper abdomen below the diaphragm (Fig. 38-3). The stomach serves several functions: it acts as a reservoir for chewed food, mixes ingested food with gastric secretions to form a semisolid liquid called *chyme*, and regulates the release of chyme into the duodenum at a controlled rate. The esophagus joins the stomach at the cardia of the stomach. The cells of the cardia secrete mucus that helps to protect the esophagus from the acidic secretions of the stomach. The dome-shaped fundus, located to the left of the cardia, acts as a reservoir. The body and the fundus have coarse folds called *rugae*. Gastric pits, which contain the acid-secreting cells of the stomach, are located mainly in the body of the stomach. The antrum, the most distal area of the stomach, is the site of G cells, which secrete gastrin. The antrum narrows into the pyloric channel, or pylorus,