Patient Information

Dysmotility

Gastroenterology

Dysmotility is very common and while the symptoms can be uncomfortable it is almost never a sign of serious illness. As you know from your experience, the symptoms can include the following:

- **Heartburn**
- **Discomfort in the upper abdomen**
- **Nausea**
- **Feeling full after a moderate sized meal**
- **Feeling bloated**
- *Less commonly* - **Sensation of pressure/lump in the throat (Globus)**
- **Chest discomfort**

You may also have a history of Irritable Bowel Syndrome, another Dysmotility condition. In fact your condition could be termed "Irritable Stomach". Irritable bowel and Irritable stomach often coexist.

This is the most common cause of indigestion, (which affects about 6 out of 10 of those with indigestion). It can be caused by an irritable stomach or by stress or emotional upset. It is thought that some stomachs take longer than others to empty, and that sometimes the symptoms are due to a sensitive stomach that feels uncomfortable when full.

The main treatment is look after your sensitive stomach by adopting the following lifestyle habits.

Stop Mechanical Irritation

- ✓ Eat slowly and chew food properly
- ✓ Do not miss meals – aim to eat every 4-6 hours while awake.
- ✓ Stop eating 2-3 hours before bedtime to aid digestion
- ✓ Choose moderate portion sizes to avoid overloading your stomach. Try not to consume large meals or pints of drink at a time (especially alcohol).
- ✓ Avoid nuts, seeds and crispy toast if they have been known to irritate your stomach

Stop Chemical Irritation

- ✓ Do not smoke - Nicotine relaxes the muscle at the bottom of the gullet and allows the stomach contents to back flow into the gullet.
- ✓ Avoid over the counter medicines that contain Aspirin or Ibuprofen
- ✓ Limit the amount of citrus fruit, vinegar, onions and chilli eaten
- ✓ Choose decaffeinated Tea, Coffee and Cola.
- ✓ Try different types of herbal tea
- ✓ Limit fizzy drinks and those that contain caffeine and citrus acid
- ✓ Limit intake of chocolate and energy drinks
- ✓ Stop alcohol for a trial period of at least 3 months to see if this helps. If alcohol is restarted, please be moderate – Less than 2 units per day for men and less than 1 unit per day for women.

Stop Physical Irritation

- ✓ Don't take very hot drinks
- ✓ Try taking mint tea, ice-cold milk or water.

Manage Your Stress

Emotional stress can make digestive symptoms more troublesome.
You may find it helpful to try one of the following approaches

- ✓ <u>Talk things through with someone you trust</u>
- ✓ Gentle relaxing walks
- ✓ Yoga / Meditation or relaxation exercises.
- ✓ Have adequate sleep / rest

- ✓ Find a hobby you enjoy
- ✓ Try to have a proper break at mealtimes

Other things that help some people

- ✓ Always sit down to eat
- ✓ Take a gentle stroll for a minimum of 10 minutes after meals
- ✓ Avoid going to sleep on a full stomach
- ✓ Avoid drinking with meals but have a small glass of still water 30-45 minutes after food.
- ✓ If bloating bothers you can try peppermint oil capsules

Making these changes could help but it will take time!

Finally …. **If your symptoms change significantly**, particularly if you should develop new digestive symptoms or lose your appetite or lose weight, do not hesitate to talk to your **GP or Practice Nurse**.

Medicine can only help to an extent in this common problem and every bit of your effort counts.

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