

Small Bowel Obstruction Home Management

If you think you are beginning to obstruct, you must use your judgment and call your doctor or go to the emergency room if needed.

Some things to try at home are:

- Most patients report some benefit by going on a clear liquid diet until their symptoms resolve.
- A moist heating pad (20 minutes on/off) to the abdomen or a warm bath for 20 minutes.
- Using relaxation or breathing techniques, meditation or mindfulness to relax your nervous system/ “relax your gut”.
- Move your body gently in ways that softly stretches the adhered area(s). Think of how a cat or dog stretches naturally, just doing what feels good in areas that feel tight.

Compression of the abdomen

<https://youtu.be/toNQedebF2g>

- This is the only self-treatment technique we recommend if you feel like you are obstructing. Do NOT use balls, tools or deeper abdominal releases at this time.
- Sit in a comfortable chair, bending forward.
- Place both hands onto either side of your abdomen.
- Slowly, taking 15-20 seconds to sink your hands into your abdomen, like they are sinking into wet clay.
- Bring your hands toward each other, gently ‘scooping’ the abdominal contents within them.
- Start at the sides of the abdomen and compress the palms inward, “scooping” the entire intestine together.



Compression Technique



- Hold the organs together for a minimum of 2 - 5 minutes. This allows your abdomen and intestines to relax if they are in spasm.
- An alternative method is to have a family member compress your abdomen while you are sitting semi-reclined or laying down.



- Always release your hold very slowly to avoid recurrence of spasm.
- With practice, you can often feel what areas are tight or hard. Allow your hands to sink in on either side of these areas and slowly compress them in, towards each other.
- Don't limit yourself to right/left or top/bottom planes. You can be site-specific to tight areas with diagonals, as long as you are gentle.
- When you feel the spasms have decreased or you are able to sink in easily, stop and take some time to relax or gently walk around the room or march on the spot.