Globus Syndrome (Globus Hystericus)

Globus Syndrome is a feeling of a lump or a sensation of something caught in your throat. Eating food or drinking fluids does not seem to get rid of it. Yet it is not noticeable during the actual act of swallowing food or liquids. Usually there is nothing physically wrong. It is troublesome because it is an unpleasant sensation which is sometimes difficult to ignore and at times may seem to worsen. The syndrome is quite common. It is estimated 45% of the population experiences features of the condition at some stage during their lives. The symptoms are usually temporary. The largest group of people who feel the need to seek medical treatment is females between the ages of 30 to 60.

CAUSES

Globus Syndrome appears to be triggered by or aggravated by stress, anxiety and depression.

- Tension related to stress could product abnormal muscle spasms in the esophagus which would account for the sensation of a lump or ball in your throat.
- Frequent swallowing or drying of the throat caused by anxiety or other strong emotions can also produce this uncomfortable sensation in your throat.
- Fear and sadness can be expressed by the body in many ways. For instance, if you had a relative with throat cancer you might become overly concerned about your own health and develop uncomfortable sensations in your throat.
- The reaction to a crisis or a trauma event in your life can take the form of a lump in your throat. It is as if you are indirectly saying you can not handle or “swallow” one more thing.

DIAGNOSIS

Usually your caregiver will know what is wrong by talking to you and examining you.

If the condition persists for several days, more testing may be done to make sure there is not another problem present. This is usually not the case.

TREATMENT

- Reassurance is often the best treatment available. Usually the problem leaves without treatment over several days.
- Sometimes anti-anxiety medications may be prescribed.
- Counseling or talk therapy can also help with strong underlying emotions.
- Note that in most cases this is not something that keeps coming back and you should not be concerned or worried.

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