

GLOBUS PHARYNGEUS

Information Sheet

What is Globus Pharyngeus?

Globus Pharyngeus is a term used to describe a persistent sensation of a 'lump in the throat' or 'pressure' in the throat when no true lump exists. It is extremely common and can be associated with a hoarse voice, persistent cough or throat clearing behaviour. Some people describe a sensation of tightness, constriction or choking, or a feeling of mucus or a foreign body in the throat that they are unable to clear. Sometimes the sensation lessens when eating and drinking but increases when stressed or worried.



What can cause Globus Pharyngeus?

Causes of globus pharyngeus may be different in different individuals. One common cause is increased tension in the muscles of the throat. There may also be irritation or swelling of the tissues lining the throat or an altered perception of how the throat feels.

Globus may be associated with:

- **Stress and Anxiety**
Globus can often be experienced by individuals at times of stress or anxiety. It often occurs when holding back strong feelings or emotions.
- **Laryngopharyngeal Reflux**
Laryngopharyngeal reflux, also referred to as 'silent reflux', is a condition in which stomach juices flow back up into the oesophagus (gullet), pharynx (throat) and larynx (voice box). It can be difficult to detect as individuals often do not get symptoms of heartburn or indigestion, but it is commonly associated with chronic throat clearing, voice changes and globus sensation.

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Review Date: April 2022

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- **Cervical Spondylitis**

Cervical Spondylitis is commonly called osteoarthritis of the neck. Some sufferers of this condition may experience globus due to increased tension in the neck and throat muscles.

- **Other causes**

Other causes can include medication side effects or other medical problems such as an enlarged thyroid gland or cervical osteophytes.

Why is Speech and Language Therapy useful?

Speech and Language Therapists (SLTs) have an expert knowledge about the anatomy and physiology of the throat. They will work with you to identify any factors that could be exacerbating your globus sensation.

What will happen at my initial consultation?

At your initial consultation a comprehensive case history will be taken which will include a review of your medical history, any medications you take regularly and your lifestyle. We will explore how these could be impacting on your throat symptoms. Baseline assessments will be taken which are not invasive, and you will be provided with an immediate treatment plan aimed at improving your symptoms.

You may be advised to have additional investigations such as an examination of your throat by an Ear Nose and Throat (ENT) doctor to aid diagnosis and treatment planning. You may also require investigations by a gastroenterologist if presenting with significant symptoms of acid reflux.

What will happen in therapy?

You may need to return for individual therapy in which you will be coached in a variety of activities. These will be aimed at reducing any excessive throat tension, addressing any throat health and hygiene concerns or throat behaviours that may be contributing to the globus. You may require voice therapy if there is any associated hoarseness of voice which concerns you, or cough suppression therapy to help eliminate any persistent throat clearing behaviour which could be potentially traumatic to the vocal cords.

The number of therapy sessions you require will depend on the cause and severity of your globus symptoms or any contributing medical problems. However most importantly your progress will be influenced by your commitment to making lifestyle changes and practicing your therapy activities outside of sessions.

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