

Self-Help for a Hiatal Hernia

Due to stress and repeated bouts of bloating and gas, or chronic nervous tension, the stomach may move up into the diaphragm creating a hiatal hernia. This stresses the stomach by inhibiting the vagus nerve and blood flow to the stomach. Protein digestion is impaired and the resulting lack of essential amino acids causes glandular malfunction, immune system deficiency, poor muscle tone, excessive weight loss or gain, cold limbs and general physical weakness.

Symptoms of a hiatal hernia include the inability to breath from the diaphragm, tension in the solar plexus, difficulty swallowing capsules, the sensation of a “lump” in throat and an over-stimulated thyroid gland (high metabolism). Chronic intestinal gas may also occur as the ileocecal valve becomes permanently swollen, irritated and unable to close properly. Most people suffering from general poor health have this condition.

This problem can be overcome using a variety of self-help techniques.

Check your breathing. Follow this simple test to access your pattern of breathing as a first step in treating the hiatal hernia. Put your hand on your abdomen as you breathe. If your abdomen moves in and out more than your chest, you are probably handling your stress well, or at least, you aren't letting stress control you.

If you are breathing from the top of your lungs, just sit back and relax to allow your breathing apparatus to revert to normal abdominal breathing. If it doesn't, then you need to relax the diaphragm. To do this, take lobelia essence or blue vervain in liquid form. Then, practice breathing from the abdomen again. You can also practice abdominal breathing while relaxing in a bath with lavender oil.

Find healthy ways to vent your repressed anger and frustration. This releases tension from the diaphragm and will help defuse much of the tension maintaining the hiatal hernia problem. For example, try taking a long, slow deep breath and feel the tension build up in your diaphragm (like you are starting to get angry). Make your hands into fists and raise them up in front of you as if you want to punch somebody. Exhale forcefully with an angry “huh!” sound while shaking your fists downward like you are hitting

something. Do this several times, safely discharging your inner tension and frustrations.

Other methods of dealing with stress include changing your environment, finding new ways to resolve problems and communicating your thoughts and feelings honestly with others.

Use manual manipulation. Find a chiropractor a massage therapist who knows how to manually manipulate a hiatal hernia. As an alternative, the following technique can be used as a self-help form of manual manipulation.

Drink a pint of warm water first thing in the morning. Next, stand on your toes and drop suddenly to your heels several times. The force of this little jump and the weight of the water help pull the stomach down in place while the warm temperature of the water relaxes the stomach area. Taking a dropper full of lobelia essence with the water will relax the stomach and make the treatment more effective.

If you're adventurous, jump off a chair or down a short flight of stairs to get the same effect. The idea behind this technique is to get your stomach to “drop” as if you were in an elevator that suddenly started going down. If this doesn't solve the problem, place both hands under your breastbone in the center of your rib cage. Take a deep breath and press your fingers firmly into the solar plexus area (just under the breastbone). As you forcefully exhale, push your fingers downward and bend forward slightly. Be careful not to push your fingers up under the rib cage. Repeat this action several times. Do this before meals on an empty stomach.

Additional Suggestions. In order to strengthen the diaphragm, certain vitamins and minerals are crucial. Red raspberry is a very good herb for toning abdominal muscles. Other herbs and formulas that may be helpful include Citrus Bioflavonoids with Vitamin C, HSN-W, and Chinese Mineral Chi Tonic.

To treat hiatal hernia syndrome that is accompanied by heartburn, use slippery elm powder mixed with a little juice or water, whole leaf aloe vera juice or Stomach Comfort instead of antacids. If you continue to get acid in your throat, sleep with your head and chest slightly elevated. Elevate your pillow to raise your head and chest.

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