

# Globus Syndrome

Information for Patients in Primary Care

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## What is globus?

Globus syndrome is a feeling of something in the throat where we can't find anything wrong. It is a very real feeling, it is not something you are "making up". You may feel it as a lump, a ledge, catarrh or simply an area of discomfort; different people have different ways of describing it. It is commonly soothed by eating.

## It is common?

Yes, it is. At one time or other approximately 50% of the population will experience it. It was first described by Hippocrates over 2000 years ago!

## What is the cause?

The simple answer to this is we don't know. Acid coming from the stomach may be responsible in some patients and if you suffer from heartburn or waterbrash (acid coming up into your mouth) it should be treated; unfortunately the throat feeling doesn't always respond to such treatment but your heartburn should. Stress does seem to play a part in globus syndrome in about two thirds of patients so often a change of lifestyle or relaxation exercises help. Many patients worry that their globus symptom is a sign of throat cancer and find that after they've been checked out they spontaneously get better.

## Is there a cure?

There is no specific treatment for globus syndrome at present. If you can, try to ignore it because the more you think about it the worse it seems to get. Excessive swallowing or throat clearing simply irritates the throat making the sensation worse, and you can get in to a vicious cycle, so try to consciously stop yourself from doing this. If your globus is particularly bad, having a drink or sucking a sweet should help by keeping the throat moist.

## Does having globus mean I'm likely to get throat cancer?

NO. In fact, most globus sufferers are non-smokers and are therefore very unlikely to get throat cancer.

## Will it ever go away?

Probably, but if there is no improvement in 6 weeks please make another appointment at the clinic.