



GastroDoxs
— defenders of the digestive system —

Bowel Obstruction

A Practical Guide For Patients

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Introduction: **Bowel Obstruction**

Bowel obstruction occurs when the small or large intestine becomes partially or completely blocked, preventing the normal movement of food, fluids, and gas. This blockage can be caused by scar tissue, hernias, tumors, or severe constipation. It's a medical emergency that requires prompt diagnosis and treatment to prevent serious complications like bowel perforation or infection.



Key Takeaways

- Can occur in the small or large intestine.
- Causes include scar tissue, tumors, hernias, and severe constipation.
- Symptoms include abdominal pain, bloating, vomiting, and inability to pass stool or gas.
- Requires urgent medical evaluation.
- Treatment may involve surgery or non-surgical decompression.



What Causes Bowel Obstruction?

Known Causes

Bowel obstruction can result from mechanical causes like tumors, strictures, adhesions, hernias, or impacted stool, and functional causes such as paralytic ileus where the bowel stops moving without a physical blockage.



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Common Signs & Symptoms

Symptoms include severe abdominal pain, bloating, vomiting, constipation, and inability to pass gas, often accompanied by cramping and abdominal swelling.

Core Symptoms Include:

- Severe abdominal pain or cramping
- Persistent bloating
- Nausea and vomiting
- Constipation or inability to pass stool
- Inability to pass gas



Severe cases can also cause:



- Dehydration
- Severe electrolyte imbalance
- Bowel perforation
- Sepsis
- Shock



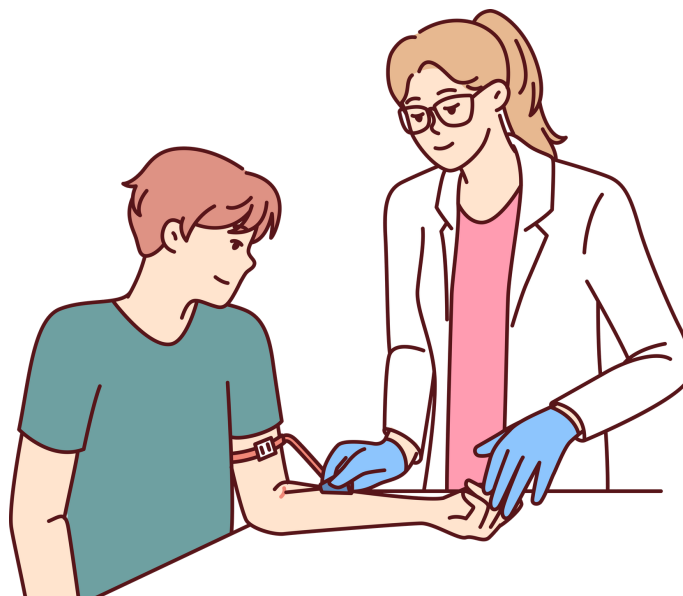
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Diagnosis & Medical Testing

Diagnosis involves a physical exam, abdominal X-ray, CT scan, or ultrasound to identify the blockage, along with blood tests to check for infection or dehydration.

Diagnostic Tools

- **Physical examination** – Check for abdominal swelling and tenderness
- **Abdominal X-ray** – Detects gas and obstruction signs
- **CT scan** – Identifies blockage location and cause
- **Ultrasound** – Useful in certain cases, especially children
- **Blood tests** – Check for infection or electrolyte imbalance



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Diet

During partial obstructions, a low-fiber, easily digestible diet may be advised. In complete obstructions, eating is stopped until the blockage is resolved.

Key Insights

- **Follow doctor's dietary guidance strictly**
- **Eat soft, low-fiber foods for partial obstructions**
- **Avoid raw vegetables and high-fiber fruits**
- **Stay hydrated**
- **Avoid large meals**
- **Do not eat with a complete blockage**



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Medications & Treatment Options

Treatment includes IV fluids, pain relief, antibiotics if infection is suspected, and in some cases, medications to stimulate bowel movement or relieve obstruction.

Treatment Options

- **IV fluids** – Prevent dehydration
- **Pain relievers** – Manage discomfort
- **Antibiotics** – Treat or prevent infection
- **Prokinetic agents** – Stimulate bowel movement (in functional obstructions)
- **Nasogastric tube decompression** – Relieves pressure



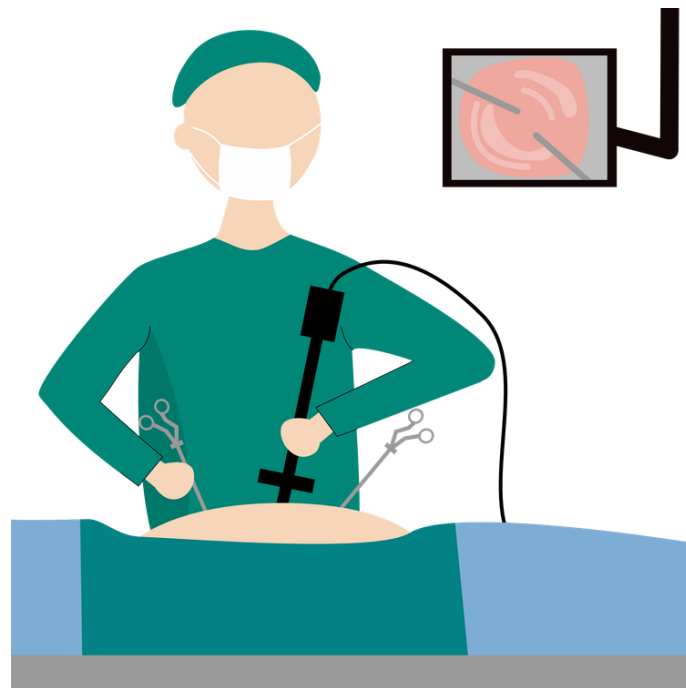
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Advanced Therapies & Procedures

Severe or complete obstructions may require surgery to remove the blockage, repair damaged bowel, or treat underlying conditions causing the obstruction.

Therapy Options

- **Surgical removal of blockage** – Tumors, scar tissue, or strictures
- **Hernia repair** – If hernia caused blockage
- **Bowel resection** – Removing damaged portions
- **Stent placement** – To open narrowed bowel areas
- **Laparoscopic surgery** – Minimally invasive option



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Coping With **Bowel Obstruction**

Coping involves following medical advice, adjusting your diet, staying hydrated, and seeking immediate care if symptoms worsen or signs of recurrence appear.

Practical Strategies

- Follow post-treatment dietary guidelines



- Avoid constipation with fiber

- Stay active to promote bowel movement



- Monitor symptoms closely

- Keep follow-up appointments

- Seek immediate care if pain or bloating returns



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FAQS About

Bowel Obstruction

Q1: Is bowel obstruction always an emergency?

A: Yes, it can quickly become life-threatening if untreated.

Q2: Can bowel obstruction go away on its own?

A: Partial obstructions may resolve, but full obstructions often need intervention.

Q3: What foods should I avoid after an obstruction?

A: High-fiber, tough, and hard-to-digest foods unless advised otherwise.

Q4: Can bowel obstruction be prevented?

A: Managing risk factors like constipation and following post-surgery care can help.



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Take **Action**

If you experience bowel Obstruction, don't ignore them. Early diagnosis and treatment can prevent complications. Schedule a consultation with GastroDoxs for expert guidance on managing your digestive health.

Visit GastroDoxs.com to schedule an appointment and access more resources on digestive health.

**Your health matters—
take the next step today!**

SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT

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