



What can I do about.....

BLOATING AND FLATULENCE

Following your surgery it is common for some people to experience discomfort from bloating and flatulence. Because the operation is a one-way valve, any air or gas which is swallowed cannot easily be belched back. You may find it is worse immediately following the operation, but it often improves over time.

There are several measures you might like to try to prevent and / or alleviate the problem:

Prevention

- Watching your diet to see if any food make the condition worse, and avoiding these foods. Some common foods that can make bloating worse include legumes (beans and lentils), fermented foods and beverages including vinegar and alcohol, plus food rich in sulphur (eggs, onion and garlic), and raw foods. Milk may even cause excess bloating and flatulence, particularly in people who are lactose intolerant
- Avoid eating too much fat in a meal
- Avoid swallowing air whilst eating and drinking
- Ensure you chew your food thoroughly and eat slowly
- Avoid carbonated drinks (soft drinks, soda water and beer)
- Avoid chewing gum and smoking
- Avoid eating just before bed time
- Try eating smaller meals more often

Relief of discomfort

If the above measures do not help, you may like to try:

- Herbal products containing peppermint, slippery elm, chamomile, charcoal, fennel and gentian may help
- Regular exercise, particularly gentle exercise after meals
- Over the counter preparations such as De-Gas or No-Gas available from your pharmacist.

We stress that these measures may help but are not guaranteed to do so. If you are concerned about persistent symptoms it is essential you discuss your problems with your surgeon or GP.