

Distal Intestinal Obstruction Syndrome

Distal Intestinal Obstruction Syndrome (DIOS) is a complication of cystic fibrosis (CF). It occurs when faecal material and intestinal contents stick to the lining of the intestines and cause a blockage.

Symptoms

Symptoms can be similar to constipation, however DIOS is not constipation. In confirmed DIOS there is usually a complete blockage of the bowel.

Symptoms of DIOS can include:

- A hard mass on the right side of the abdomen
- Cramps
- Abdominal pain
- Bloating
- Hard stools
- Reduced bowel movements
- Loss of appetite
- Vomiting

DIOS needs to be diagnosed with an abdominal x-ray.

Causes

If you were born with a meconium ileus or have had previous episodes of DIOS, then you are at an increased risk.

DIOS also often occurs with a change in diet, not enough enzymes or salt, illness, exacerbation and/or dehydration in hot weather.



This causes contents of the bowel to become thicker and stickier, leading to a blockage.

Treatment

You may be prescribed laxatives or stool softening medications by your CF care team. Extra fluids will also be required by increasing drinks or via an intravenous drip.

If you have previously experienced DIOS it can be really helpful to learn to recognise and treat symptoms early to prevent another episode.

Useful Tips:

- Make sure your enzymes are correctly matched to your fat intake.
- Ensure adequate fluid intake to prevent dehydration (8-10 glasses of water a day) .

- Ensure adequate salt intake, particularly in warm weather.
- Include adequate fibre in your diet.

Useful Resources

- [CFWA Factsheets](#)
- [CF Food \(CFWA\)](#)
- [DIOS](#) (NEMO)
- [DIOS](#) (CF Canada)

Cystic Fibrosis WA
The Niche
11 Aberdare Road
Nedlands WA 6009

T: +61 8 6457 7333
F: +61 6457 7344
E: admin@cfwa.org.au

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