

Retrograde Cricopharyngeal Dysfunction

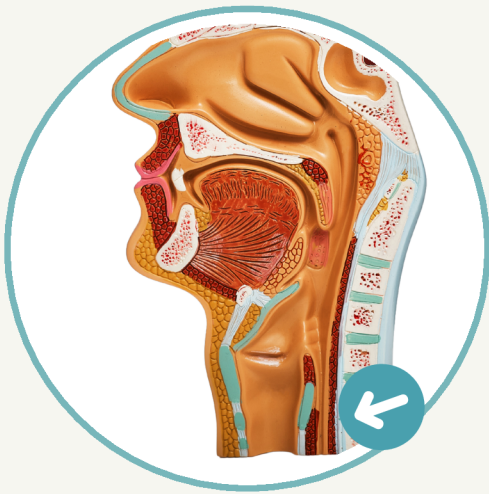


Retrograde cricopharyngeal dysfunction is a condition in which the muscle at the top of the oesophagus allows free passage of food and drink but doesn't relax to release air. You can't burp. The air then causes abdominal pain and bloating, gurgling noises in the throat and chest pain. Relief is only possible with lying down and after forced belching.

There is not specific investigation that leads to a diagnosis, but a swallow assessment, CT or MRI may be required to rule out other causes.



Botox injected into the muscle is the only effective treatment. Whilst botox needs to be repeated for other conditions such as migraine or cosmesis, in rCPD, the result of botox is often lifelong as your neurological system will now know how to burp.



Cricopharyngeus is located below your throat and behind the voicebox. If it injected into the incorrect area it can cause voice weakness and an unsafe swallow, which would be temporary. It is for this reason that I perform this procedure under a short general anaesthetic which allows examination of the back of the throat and the lining of the oesophagus to rule out other conditions, as well as precision placement of the botox. You'll be home the same day.

You will be required to adopt a soft diet for 3 days after surgery, after which point you can return to normal diet.

It is normal to feel a lump at the back of the throat when swallowing for 2 weeks after surgery.

Botox take up to 7 days to have an effect so you may experience ongoing rCPD symptoms for the first week or two.

If you have chest pain, a persistent sore throat or difficulty swallowing after surgery, let us know straight away.

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