

Sausage in the Diaphragm

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Hiatal Hernia

Research states by the age of 60...60% of the population will have a Hiatal Hernia many with no symptoms. Who is to say there are no symptoms? A clinical massage therapist can come across the initial stages of these mechanical problems when touching the body tissue and listening to the response. Massage should encompass the viscera and the muscles and connective tissue if it is to reach its ultimate purpose which is prevention of disease and maintaining optimum flexibility and tissue texture. Let's discuss the signs and how massage can treat the Hiatal Hernia

To test the HH put your fingers just below the breast bone and take a **deep breath**. You should feel the tissue expand and move **outward**. Did you need to lift your shoulders and chest to take a breath?

When you are angry do you suck your breath upward? When you are tired do you tend to swallow air?

Are you sensitive at the waist or when you wear belts? Do you have difficulty swallowing pills or tablets? Does deep breathing get worse when you bend or lie down?

The Hiatal Hernia restricts "inhale" when the diaphragm moves out and downward and restricts the "deep exhale" which is necessary for the Vagus Nerve and lymphatics. The stomach is stuck within the "hole" of the diaphragm and could be in spasm creating an inflammatory response to the surrounding tissue. It is now easier for the body to "raise the ribs and breathe through the mouth" in order to get air into the lungs. The heart has valves which depend upon the pressure/volume of breathing to open and close and is also affected by the restrictions in the diaphragm. This area now has become sensitive and tight.

Hiatal Hernia can be caused by deep vomiting, heavy coughing, a punch to the chest with the wind knocked out, heavy lifting, etc. Whenever lifting a heavy object bend the knees and exhale outward deeply and tighten the abdominals so that the stomach does not move upwards between the diaphragm and esophagus causing a Hiatal Hernia.

Massage can be very effective in pulling down the stomach and addressing restrictions of surrounding muscles. The internet has techniques you can try at home that are very easy and safe. One that I recall is filling your stomach with a pint of warm water to calm it down and make it heavy ... then stand on your toes and quickly drop back onto your heels. Repeat several times.

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