

Medication

Antidiarrhoeal medication – Loperamide is a useful for treating diarrhoea and is best taken 30 minutes before a meal. It can be more effective if taken daily with in regular pattern at regular times. It can have great benefits but may still leave you with some unpredictable periods of diarrhoea. Loperamide has less likely to help you if you pass pale, greasy stool because of bile acid malabsorption. Codeine is another antidiarrhoeal agent.

Bile Acid Sequestrants – These bind with the bile acid in the small bowel to prevent irritation for the large bowel. There are 2 different forms available tablets (Colesevelam) and powders (Cholestyramine). It is important to remember to take which ever you have been prescribed for at least 10 days before deciding if it has helped you or not. It may take several weeks for it to help with smelly wind. If a treatment works you will need to take this for the rest of your life, if you stop the treatment the symptoms will return immediately or within a few days.

South Wales Neuroendocrine Tumour Service



For further information please contact:

Cath Powell or Beccy Taylor
029 20742807

Clinical Lead - Dr Mohid S Khan
02920743443

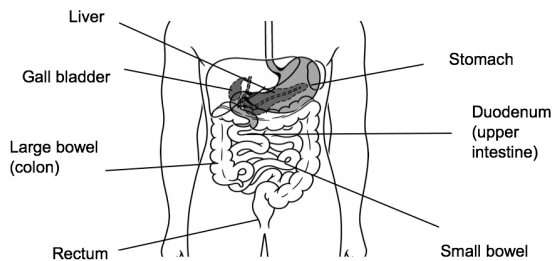
Bile Acid Malabsorption

This leaflet explains bile acid malabsorption, how it is contributing to your symptoms and how they are best treated.

What do bile salts do?

Bile acids are released from the liver and gallbladder when you eat any fat. They are used by the body to digest fat as it travels through the small intestine.

They are then reabsorbed by the body in the terminal ileum and sent back to the liver ready for your next meal. If your terminal ileum has been removed or damaged, not enough of the bile salts can be reabsorbed. This causes loose or watery stools.



How does it affect people?

Bile acid malabsorption can lead to a number of symptoms, you may only have some of them.

It can make your bowel function unpredictable and erratic leading to frequency and urgency when having your bowels open. Sometimes, stools are pale and greasy and can be difficult to flush

away. You may also experience cramp-like abdominal pain, weight loss or offensive wind.

It can lead to a lack of vitamins and minerals especially the fat soluble Vitamins A, D, E and K, and Vitamin B12.

Very occasionally weight loss can occur due to the lack of bile salts to digest food properly. If left untreated there is an increased risk of developing kidney or gallstones.

Do I need to go for any tests?

You may be sent for a SehCAT scan. This involves swallowing a slightly radioactive capsule. Several hours and a week later you will have a scan. The results of these determine if you have bile salt malabsorption.

Ongoing Monitoring

It will be important to have regular blood tests to monitor your vitamin and mineral levels in your body. This will happen if you attend outpatient appointments or with your GP.

How can it be treated?

There are various treatments for bile acid malabsorption depending on its severity. They will treat the symptoms but will not cure it.

- Mild – can be treated with dietary changes
- Moderate – often treated with medication
- Severe – both medication and dietary changes may be needed

Dietary Changes

A reduced fat diet can help with mild bile salt malabsorption but with an active tumour, care must be taken not to unintentionally lose weight. You may be referred to our dietician who will give you further advice and support with this.