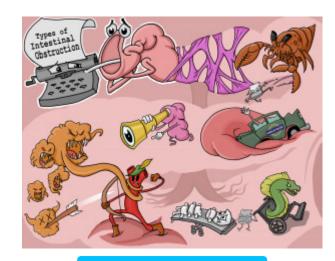


# **Types of Intestinal Obstruction**

An intestinal obstruction occurs when the contents of the gastrointestinal tract cannot pass through the intestines. Obstructions can be either mechanical, involving an identifiable blockage, or non-mechanical, having neuromuscular or vascular origins.



**PLAY PICMONIC** 

### Mechanical

### Adhesions

#### Adhesive-tissue

Adhesions are areas of scar tissue that develop on the outside of the intestine after surgery, or injury to the bowel. Initially, adhesions may not be troublesome; however, movement of the intestine can stretch the scar tissue into a long band. This band of tissue may eventually encircle the intestine, and squeeze it shut causing an obstruction.

#### Hernia

#### Hermit-crab

When there is an area of weak muscle in the abdomen, a portion of the small intestine can slip through the muscle fibers causing a hernia. If the protruding hernia becomes pinched, it can cause intestinal obstruction.

# Volvulus

### Volvo Stuck in a Loop of Bowel

Intestinal obstruction caused by twisting of the bowel is called a volvulus. This type of obstruction can often be resolved without surgery.

#### Intussusception

## Intestine-telescope

This type of obstruction occurs when a segment of the intestine telescopes or folds into another portion of the intestine. Currant jelly-like stools are characteristic assessment findings, along with a palpable sausage-shaped mass in the RUQ. Intussusception is a medical emergency.

#### Tumor

#### Tumor-guy

Intestinal tumors can grow inside the intestine, creating a blockage, or they can develop outside the intestine, pinching it closed.

## Non-Mechanical

#### **Mesenteric Artery Occlusion**

### Mesenteric Archery-artery Occluded

Intestinal obstruction resulting from an arterial occlusion is rare. In most cases, an embolus disrupts blood flow to an area of the intestine, causing a non-mechanical blockage.

# **Spinal Injury**

#### Spine Injured

Injury to the spinal cord that disrupts the signals from the brain to the intestines can disrupt peristalsis, causing paralytic ileus.

### **Paralytic Ileus**

#### Wheelchair Eel

This type of obstruction occurs when intestinal peristalsis is absent; assessment will reveal a lack of bowel sounds. Paralytic ileus is common after surgery.