

Flushing

The Facts



Flushing



Diarrhoea Gastric pain



Wheezing



Irregular Heartbeat

Flushing is a common symptom of **Neuroendocrine Tumours** (NET's). Recognising that flushing is part of NETs is important, as this symptom can be very distressing, and it is noted to have a negative impact on health-related quality of life for people with NETs.

Flushing is when the skin on your face, neck, ears, upper chest, and arms feels hot and the skin changes colour ranging from pink to purple. These flushing episodes may last from a few minutes to a few hours or even longer. Flushing is often dry with no perspiration and may happen for no obvious reason, although it can be triggered by stress, exercise or alcohol intake and certain foods.

It is important to note that there are other conditions which cause flushing such as:

- Menopause
- Emotional distress
- Alcohol intake
- Dermatological conditions
- Other medical conditions

Flushing is also a common symptom of Carcinoid Syndrome. These are a collective group of symptoms caused by the release of hormones from NETs. These symptoms are mainly skin flushing (90%), diarrhoea (70%) (Access [Managing Diarrhoea Factsheet here](#)) and abdominal pain (40%). Other symptoms like low blood pressure, headache and difficulty breathing or wheezing may also occur. These collective symptoms are more common in people with a NET of the foregut.

The foregut consists of the end of the oesophagus, stomach, and a portion of the duodenum or small intestine, together with the pancreas, liver, and gallbladder.

Management of flushing is challenging as there are no known over the counter medications that can help. However, avoiding known triggers such as alcohol and certain foods and managing stress with relaxation and meditation techniques can decrease the severity of the episodes and lower its impact.

If **flushing** symptoms persists, speak to your treating specialist as treatment with Somatostatin Analogues (SSA's) might be an indication for you.

References

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