

Herbal treatment regimens for SIBO or IMO

Information about the details of herbal therapy for SIBO is derived from naturopaths, who have been using such treatment for people with SIBO and confirming clearance of methane on breath testing for years. The instructions below come from Allison Siebecker, ND, in Portland, Oregon. The instructions include the standard dose levels that I have seen described. When I have had patients take herbal agents, I have asked them to start each one alone for a couple of days, and take with a large glass of water. A few patients have had to reduce the number of pills to tolerate treatment—abdominal discomfort has occasionally occurred at first but often improves. The current consensus is that patients should continue a relatively low carbohydrate diet for at least 3 months, probably longer, after treatment.

Both Dr. Siebecker and Dr. Mark Pimentel recommend use of a prokinetic agent at bedtime after the initial treatment, whether it is with prescription antibiotics or herbal treatment or elemental diet. Prokinetic agents are described on a separate page in this Resources section of my website.

Here are some examples of herbal antimicrobial treatments for different lactulose breath test results as described by Dr. Siebecker. Treatment lasts at least 4 weeks, and multiple rounds of treatment are often necessary. The products below are all available on Amazon.com or other retailers without prescription.

Patients with an abnormal rise in hydrogen, with normal methane results

These patients can take two of the following 3 herbal preparations: one that contains berberine, one that contains preferably dried oregano rather than oregano oil, and one that contains neem. T

Patients with an abnormal methane result (with or without abnormal hydrogen result)

Start with allicin, which is derived from garlic. Add either berberine or oil of oregano. Or use Atrantil, a combination herbal preparation that is thought to suppress methane formation. This may have to be used chronically at a reduced dose after initial treatment at 2 pills 3 times per day.

Patients with an abnormal hydrogen sulfide result

Dried oregano with bismuth subcitrate (total bismuth 1500-2000 mg per day), and bismuth subcitrate 500 mg 3 or 4 times a day (this is available in the US only from compounding pharmacies).

Berberine: This is a component of multiple different botanicals including goldenseal, Oregon grape. Berberine Complex 500 mg by Integrative Therapeutics, up to 5 grams per day (some patients may respond to 3-4 grams) in 3 divided doses (3 pills 3 times a day).

Neem: Ayush Herbs Neem Plus 300 mg (includes triphala), 1800 mg or 2 pills 3 times a day

Oregano: Biotics ADP 50 mg of oregano from dried leaf, 300 mg total or 2 pills 3 times a day

Allicin: Allimax Pro 450 mg, total 2700 mg or 2 pills 3 times a day