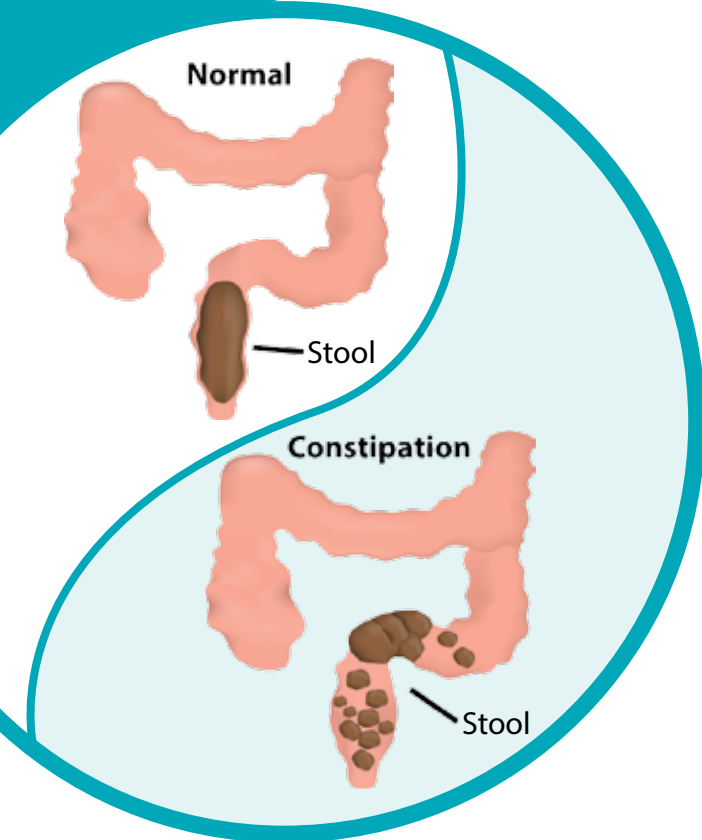


Constipation in Babies and Children



Let's learn about it

Constipation means it is hard to have a bowel movement (poop). If a child has 3 or less bowel movements in a week, the child may be constipated.

- Some children have a bowel movement every day while some have them less often. This is normal.
- Children's stool comes in different colors. Eating different foods can change the colour of the stool. For example, blueberries can make the stool very dark.

The Bristol stool chart*

Types 1 and 2 are constipation, Types 3 and 4 are normal

Type 1		Separate hard lumps, like nuts (hard to pass)
Type 2		Sausage-shaped but lumpy
Type 3		Like a sausage but with cracks on the surface
Type 4		Like a sausage or snake, smooth and soft

* Not to be used with newborns



Constipation will give children stomach pain. It will also make them feel full.

Nutrition tips

Let's learn what to do

- ✓ Serve high fibre foods and water every day

Age	Daily fluid needs
2-3	4 cups
4-8	5 cups
9-13	7 cups

- High fibre foods and water can help prevent constipation by keeping water in the gut.
- Make water your child's main drink. Milk is a great choice too.
- Children should not have fruit drinks, fruit cocktails, drink crystals, or caffeinated drinks (coffee, tea, pop, energy drinks).

✓ Focus on healthy foods

- Country foods have all of the nutrients children need to grow healthy and strong.
- Offer food from each of the 4 food groups every day.
- Offer healthy foods even if you think they will cause constipation. Regular amounts of meat, milk, cheese or other dairy products do **not** cause constipation.



✓ Prunes can help with constipation

- Prunes can make the stool softer and easier to pass.
- Start with one serving a day:
 - ¼ cup of prunes
 - ½ cup prune juice
- Don't give children aged 1- 6 more than ¾ cup of prune juice per day.
- Don't give children aged 7- 18 more than 1 ½ cups of prune juice per day.



✓ Seal fat may help with constipation

- Fresh, beaten seal fat is known by elders to help with constipation.
- Warm seal fat in a frying pan on low-heat to separate the oil from the fibres.
- Give ½ teaspoon of oil per day. Mix it with breast milk, formula or milk.

Lifestyle tips

- ✓ Keep kids active. Physical activity keeps bowel movements regular.
- ✓ Try to get your child to go to the toilet at the same time every day. After meals is a good time.
- ✓ Give your child lots of time to sit on the toilet. Be patient and don't rush them.
- ✓ Teach children who are old enough to stop what they are doing and sit on the toilet when they have the urge to go.
- ✓ If your child has trouble having a bowel movement, use something to lift their legs higher. This puts their gut in a better position.
- ✓ Check with the nurse or doctor if you are worried about your child's bowel movements.



Date _____ Name _____

Healthcare Provider (Name) _____

