

Chronic constipation

Chronic constipation means having fewer than 3 bowel movements in a week, hard stools and difficulty passing stools. It is a very common problem, especially in women and the elderly. It causes stomach ache, gas, hemorrhoids, anal fissures, etc. However, bowel retraining is possible.

- Drink at least 2 liters of fluids a day: water, vegetable broth, fruit juice, herbal teas, etc. Drink a cup or two of warm (or hot) water or a glass of fresh squeezed orange juice before you have anything else..
- Eat more fiber: vegetables, salads, pulses, fruit (plums and kiwi fruit are the most laxative), dried fruit (such as prunes), whole grain cereals. Eat yogurt every day. It is not a laxative, but it regulates intestinal activity.
- Go to the bathroom when you need to: do not hold it in.
- Try to go to the bathroom at the same time every day (the best time is usually after breakfast). Sit on the toilet for a reasonable amount of time, 15 to 20 minutes, but keep it short if you have hemorrhoids. The best position for passing stool is to sit with your feet propped up on a foot stool or ashoe box).



- Glycerin suppositories are stimulant laxatives but should not be used very often.
- Exercise: the more you move, the more your intestines move.
- Add wheat bran to your diet, especially to vegetables, but not to yogurt or milk. Begin with a small amount and, if necessary, gradually increase up to 4 tablespoons per day. Remember to drink plenty of fluids.



- Some people like to read when they go to the bathroom. That is all right as long as they don't spend too much time on the toilet.

Avoid situations that can cause constipation, such as stress, anxiety and some medicines.

If you follow this advice, you will seldom have to take any medication. Consult with your doctor if things don't get better after a month, particularly before taking any laxatives or purgatives. Some laxatives, including those that are plant-based, can cause severe bowel inflammation.