

**Constipation** is when a person has fewer bowel movements in a week than normal, has difficulty having a bowel movement, or has stools that are dry, hard, or larger than normal.

**Follow these instructions at home:**

**Eating and drinking**



- Eat foods that have a lot of fiber, such as fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and beans.
- Limit foods that are high in fat, low in fiber, or overly processed, such as french fries, hamburgers, cookies, candies, and soda.
- Drink enough fluid to keep your urine clear or pale yellow.

**General instructions**

- Exercise regularly or as told by your health care provider.
- Go to the restroom when you have the urge to go. **Do not** hold it in.
- Take over-the-counter and prescription medicines only as told by your health care provider. These include any fiber supplements.
- Practice pelvic floor retraining exercises, such as deep breathing while relaxing the lower abdomen and pelvic floor relaxation during bowel movements.
- Watch your condition for any changes.
- Keep all follow-up visits as told by your health care provider. This is important.

**Contact a health care provider if:**

- You have pain that gets worse.
- You have a fever.
- You do not have a bowel movement after 4 days.
- You vomit.
- You are not hungry.
- You lose weight.
- You are bleeding from the anus.
- You have thin, pencil-like stools.

**Get help right away if:**

- You have a fever and your symptoms suddenly get worse.
- You leak stool or have blood in your stool.
- Your abdomen is bloated.
- You have severe pain in your abdomen.
- You feel dizzy or you faint.

**This information is not intended to replace advice given to you by your health care provider. Make sure you discuss any questions you have with your health care provider.**