

CORRECT TOILETING POSTURE

Correct toileting posture is extremely crucial in the management of constipation. You need to be able to relax the pelvic floor muscles and sphincters to be able to open your bowels correctly. The best way to do so, is by sitting on the toilet in the correct way. Follow the steps below:

1. While sitting on the toilet, have both feet widely separated and resting on a wide stool so the knees are higher than your hips
2. Ensure your feet and thighs are well supported
3. You need to maintain an arch in your back and lean forward
4. Then brace your arms on your legs
5. You need to then draw your tummy muscles in and then bulge your tummy out, so that it widens around the waist
6. As your tummy muscles are bulging out you should then lightly bear down for a bowel motion



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MANAGEMENT OF CHRONIC CONSTIPATION



HOW TO MANAGE YOUR CONSTIPATION

You need to be adequately hydrated, aiming to drink around 1200ml of water. A good indicator to know if you are hydrated well is by having a pale/clear urine colour.



You need to have an adequate fibre intake of around 30 grams per day. To boost your fibre intake try the following

Mild constipation: Normcol (Green box)

Moderate Constipation: Normacol (Blue box)

Severe: See your doctor



Do not delay your urge to open your bowels, as this will suppress your urge completely and make it hard to pass stool later.

In case you have a bowel prolapse you may need to splint the prolapse during a bowel motion, using a Femmeze may assist you with that.

Gentle exercising is very important for maintaining a healthy gut, aiming for 30 minutes of general exercising everyday is essential

HOW TO KNOW YOU ARE CONSTIPATED

You know you are constipated if you have 2 or more of the following:

- 2 or less bowel motions per week
- Straining to open your bowels most of the time
- Taking longer than 60 seconds to open the bowels
- Feeling a sensation of incomplete emptying
- Have hard/lumpy stool (Type 1 and 2 on the Bristol stool chart)

Bristol Stool Chart

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 its surface
Type 4		Like a sausage or snake, smooth and soft
Type 5		Soft blobs with clear-cut edges (passed easily)
Type 6		Fluffy pieces with ragged edges, a mushy stool
Type 7		Watery, no solid pieces. Entirely Liquid

NORMAL BOWEL MOTION

Normally an average person should be able to open their bowels between 3 times per day to once per 3 days, without pushing or straining, while taking no longer than 60 seconds.



What Causes It?

There are many reasons why a person may be constipated. Usually it is a result of low fluid and fibre intake. However other causes may be related to drug intake or other disease processes.

The effects on the Pelvic Floors?

Constipation has a major impact on the pelvic health. Usually patients with constipation have other pelvic problems like prolapse, urgency, pain and incontinence. Unless the constipation is managed, physiotherapy and medical intervention will have minimal or no effect.