

Constipation Management

Some medications and treatments can cause constipation. This guide is to help you to prevent constipation and maintain regular bowel movements. If you experience **severe** abdominal pain, bloating, inability to pass gas, or vomiting, please contact your doctor.

Constipation is likely if you:

- Are straining
- Have lumpy or hard stools
- Have the feeling of an unfinished bowel movement or blockage
- Have not had a bowel movement in 3 days. The goal is to have one every 1-2 days.

Bowel Care Medications

(All available at pharmacies, or supermarkets with pharmacies in them)

Step 1

Take 2 Senna tablets by mouth at bedtime. If no results in 24 hours then go to Step 2.

Step 2

Take 2 Senna tablets by mouth 2 times a day.

Take one dose (17 grams) polyethylene glycol (MiraLAX) per instructions on the bottle. If no results in 24 hours then go to Step 3.

Step 3

Take 3-4 Senna tablets by mouth 2 times a day.

Take one dose (17 grams) polyethylene glycol (MiraLAX) 2 times a day. If no results in 24 hours then go to Step 4.

Step 4

As long as you are still passing gas, take one bottle of Magnesium Citrate (may work quickly). If no results in 24 hours then go Step 5. If you have kidney failure or are on dialysis, consult your doctor before using Magnesium Citrate.

Step 5

Please contact your doctor's office for further instructions.

****If you have unmanageable stools (too often or too watery), stop bowel medications for 24 hours and then restart at one step lower. For example, if you have loose stools at Step 3, stop bowel medications for 24 hours then restart with Step 2 medications.**

Preventing Constipation

- Stay hydrated by drinking at least eight 8-ounce cups of fluid every day. This can include water, fruit or vegetable juices, tea or coffee, and other beverages.
- Be active every day, if you are able. Try small amounts of activity like walking or chair/bed exercises for 5-10 minutes a few times each day.

Managing Constipation

Continue the prevention tips above plus your bowel medications. You may also try these tips to help stimulate a bowel movement:

- Drink warm liquids like tea or coffee, warm water with lemon and honey, or broth.
- Drink 6 ounces of prune juice or 6 ounces of juice cocktail one time each day.

Juice Cocktail (makes one 6-ounce serving)

¼ cup prune juice

¼ cup apple juice

¼ cup orange juice

Directions: Combine juices in a mug and warm before serving.

Bowel Care Tracker

	Stool Y or N	N= Normal D= Diarrhea C= Difficult to pass or hard	Medication Step (1, 2, 3 or 4)	Glasses of Fluid (#)	Exercise Y or N	Notes:
Sunday						
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						