

MANAGING RECURRENT CONSTIPATION AT HOME

INFANTS (LESS THAN 1 YEAR OLD)

- Fruit Juice: Try giving fruit juice (such as apple, pear, grape or prune) once to twice daily. Give one ounce of fruit juice per month of age with equal amount of water per serving, up to 6 ounces of juice daily. (For example, a 2 month old baby would get a bottle with 2 ounces of juice with 2 ounces of water.)
- Solids: For babies older than 4 months who are taking solids, add baby foods with high fiber content twice daily (such as oatmeal or barley cereal, peas, beans, apricots, prunes, pears, peaches, plums, and spinach).
- Flexed Position: Help your baby pass a stool by holding the knees against the chest to simulate squatting (the natural position for pushing out a BM). Gently pumping the lower abdomen may also help.
- Bath: If baby is having a lot of difficulty passing a stool, can try having baby sit in lukewarm water. This may help relax the anal sphincter and release the BM.
- Suppositories: If a bath doesn't work, try a glycerin suppository to smooth the way. For an infant <1 year old, use ½ Babylax or ½ pediatric suppository. If suppositories are unavailable, give 10 seconds of gentle rectal stimulation using a lubricated thermometer. A gentle rectal dilation with a lubricated finger (covered with plastic wrap) is also acceptable. This should not be used chronically or infants may begin to depend on that stimulation to initiate stooling.
- Miralax: For infants greater than 6 months with constipation that persists despite dietary changes, can try Miralax ½ - 1 tsp per day on a regular basis to achieve soft stools. If this is used, the long-term plan for Miralax should be discussed with your baby's doctor at your baby's next visit.

MANAGING RECURRENT CONSTIPATION AT HOME (Toddlers/Preschoolers: age 1- 5 years)

- High Fiber Diet: Make sure your child eats fruits or vegetables at least 3 times a day (raw, unpeeled fruits and vegetables are best). Some examples of good fruits & vegetables are raisins, apples, peas, beans, cauliflower, broccoli, peaches, pears, & apricots. Other good high-fiber foods are bran, graham crackers, oatmeal, brown rice, shredded wheat & whole wheat bread. Children 4 years old and above can have popcorn. [Warning: avoid any foods that would be choking hazards based on age]
- Fluids: Increase water intake and avoid carbonated beverages
- Foods to avoid: Decrease constipating foods such as dairy (ex. milk, ice cream, cheese, yogurt); bananas & white rice can also be constipating to some children
- Sitting on the Toilet: (for children who are toilet trained) Encourage your child to retrain the rectum and establish a regular bowel pattern by sitting on the toilet for 5-10 minutes after meals, especially breakfast. If your child is on an adult-sized toilet, try putting a stool beneath his feet so he can have some leverage to push out a BM.
- Toilet Training: If your child has developed constipation during toilet training, temporarily put your child back in diapers or pull-ups. Praise him for the release of BM's. Avoid any pressure, punishment, or power struggles about holding back poops, sitting on the potty, or resistance to training.
- Miralax- If soft and regular stools are not accomplished with dietary and behavioral changes, in addition to continuing those changes, the next best step for most kids is to start on daily Miralax therapy. Miralax is a colorless, tasteless, odorless powder that can be mixed with any noncarbonated beverage besides milk. The starting Miralax dose for children ages 1-5 years is 1 teaspoon per year of age daily. (For example, a 3 year old child would get 3 teaspoons of Miralax.) This dose can then be increased or decreased by ½ teaspoon every third day until the child is having daily soft stools. Once the right dose for your child is found, continue on this dose for at least several months if the constipation issues have been chronic. Your child may need to be on Miralax long-term to prevent constipation problems.
- Acute rectal pain from Constipation:
 - Give a 20-minute sitz bath in warm water (2 oz of baking soda per tub). This helps many children relax the anal sphincter and release the BM.
 - If the sitz bath doesn't work, try a glycerin suppository to smooth the way. (Dose: 1 BabyLax or pediatric suppository) If suppositories are unavailable, give 10 seconds of gentle rectal stimulation using a lubricated thermometer (if less than 3 years old). A gentle rectal dilation with a lubricated finger (covered with plastic wrap) is also acceptable.
 - If pain not relieved in 1-2 hours, call office.

MANAGING RECURRENT CONSTIPATION AT HOME

(For Children >5 years and Teenagers)

- High Fiber Diet: Make sure your child eats fruits or vegetables at least 3 times a day (raw, unpeeled fruits and vegetables are best). Some examples of good fruits & vegetables are raisins, apples, peas, beans, cauliflower, broccoli, peaches, pears, & apricots. Other good high-fiber foods are popcorn, bran, graham crackers, oatmeal, brown rice, shredded wheat & whole wheat bread.
- Fluids: Increase water intake (48-64 ounces of water daily) and avoid carbonated beverages
- Foods to avoid: Decrease constipating foods such as dairy (ex. milk, ice cream, cheese, yogurt); bananas & white rice can also be constipating to some children
- Sitting on the Toilet: Encourage your child to retrain the rectum and establish a regular bowel pattern by sitting on the toilet for 5-10 minutes after meals, especially breakfast.
- Miralax: If soft and regular stools are not accomplished with dietary and behavioral changes, in addition to continuing those changes, the next best step for most kids & teens is to start on daily Miralax therapy. Miralax is a colorless, tasteless, odorless powder that can be mixed with any noncarbonated beverage besides milk. The starting Miralax dose for kids over 5 years old is 1 capful daily. This dose can then be increased or decreased by ½ teaspoon every third day until the child is having daily soft stools. Once the right dose for your child is found, continue on this dose for at least several months if the constipation issues have been chronic. Your child may need to be on Miralax long-term to prevent constipation problems.
- Acute rectal pain from Constipation:
 - Give a 20-minute sitz bath in warm water (2 oz of baking soda per tub). This helps many children relax the anal sphincter and release the BM.
 - If the sitz bath doesn't work, try a glycerin suppository to smooth the way. (Dosing: age 5-6 yr- 1 BabyLax or pediatric suppository; age 6-12 yr.- 1 adult suppository; age 12 yr & up- 2 adult suppositories)
 - If pain not relieved in 1-2 hours, call office.