

## Treatment

**Toilet time:** Encourage your child to sit on the toilet 20-30 minutes after the main daily meal. This will establish a positive routine.

**Positioning:** Maintaining a good toilet position may be useful for children who suffer from constipation.

Knees above hips

Lean forward, elbows on knees

Bulge tummy, straighten spine.



### Tips:

1. Positive language, reward and praise will encourage your child to practice good toileting behaviour

2. Pick specific targets e.g. Complete toilet time after each meal for one week, or including fruit and vegetables with each meal



3. Keep a progress chart.

## Medication

Some children will require medication along with a healthy diet and exercise to relieve symptoms of constipation.

**ALWAYS** talk to a health care professional before administering any medication to your child.



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**Please contact your GP or Public Health Nurse if you have any concerns**

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# CHILDHOOD CONSTIPATION

**Information for Patients,  
Parents and Guardians**



## What is Constipation?

Constipation is difficulty passing stool and infrequency of bowel movements, usually less than 3 per week, or not at all.

Childhood constipation is often “functional” which means there is no physical or hormonal cause and can be prevented if the advice in this leaflet is followed.

### Symptoms may include:

- Passing large, hard stools or small pellet-like stools
- Pain when passing stool
- Passing excess wind
- Tummy pain
- Bed wetting
- Poor appetite
- Restlessness/fidgeting
- Faecal staining or leaking (occurs when a large hard stool blocks the bowel and “overflow” of faecal matter escapes from around it)



## Know your Poo!!!








Monitoring your child’s bowel movement can indicate if your child is suffering from constipation.

Use the chart below to compare your child’s bowel movements.

Hard, small stools like Type 1 to 3 on the chart indicate constipation.

Watery, loose stool like Type 6 and 7 on the chart may indicate “overflow”.

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

## Treatment

**Diet:** High fibre foods and plenty of liquids.

- Fruit and Vegetables
- Wholegrain bread, pasta and rice
- Pulses e.g. kidney beans
- High fibre cereals e.g. Bran Flakes, Weetabix
- 6 to 8 cups of water a day



**Exercise:** More than 30 minutes a day helps to move stool through the bowel.



**Other Natural Remedies:**

- Warm baths
- Tummy massage

**AVOID:**

- Junk food
- Fizzy drinks
- High fat, greasy food

