

# How To Deal With Constipation

## Signs of Constipation

Signs of constipation include:

- decreased frequency of bowel movements
- incomplete passage of dry, hard stool
- bloating
- rectal fullness
- lots of gas
- abdominal cramping.

## How To Manage Constipation

- Drink plenty of liquids (about 8 to 10 large glasses a day).
- Eat high-fiber foods such as:
  - bran
  - nuts and seeds
  - whole-grain breads
  - popcorn
  - fresh and dried fruits
  - beans
  - raw or cooked vegetables.

- Limit the amount of gas-producing foods (such as cabbage, beans, green peppers and onions) you eat.
- Get regular physical activity — simply walking will help.
- Take laxatives, stool softeners or enemas as ordered.
- Do not use any rectal medicines or enemas if your white blood cell count is low because of your treatment.
- Keep a record of your stools every day. Your health care provider can use this to help evaluate your treatment.
- Ask your health care provider if you should start a daily bowel routine.

Simple constipation can lead to more serious medical conditions. Tell your health care provider if you are having any problems. Ask your health care provider or nurse if you have any more questions about constipation.

## When To Call Your Health Care Provider

Call your health care provider if you:

- do not have a bowel movement for 2 or more days
- have severe, sudden onset of abdominal pain.