

Constipation

In Children



What is constipation?

Constipation is when bowel movements occur less often and they may also be hard to pass. A bowel movement is also known by many as stool or poop. Constipation is very common in children and is usually easily treated.

How do I know if my child is constipated?

Normal bathroom habits are different from child to child. You can tell if your child is constipated when they go to the bathroom less than what is normal for them. Check with your child's health care provider if your child's constipation is causing concern.

What causes constipation?

- Not eating enough fiber
- Not enough physical activity
- Not drinking enough water
- Eating too much dairy (such as milk and cheese)
- Holding in bowel movements
- Other health conditions

Symptoms of constipation in children may include:

- Stomach pain
- Poor appetite
- Hard bowel movements
- Many days without a bowel movement

Treatment and prevention are the same!

Constipation can often be treated and prevented with the three F(s): **Fiber, Fluids, and Fitness**.

Fiber – Eat more fiber.

- The best sources of fiber are whole grains, beans, fruits, and vegetables.
- Add high-fiber foods to your child's diet slowly.
- Check the Dietary Fiber section of food labels.
 - Children 1 to 3 years of age may need 14 grams of fiber each day.
 - Children 4 to 8 years of age may need up to 20 grams of fiber each day.

Fluids – Drink more water.

- As your child eats more fiber, they should drink more water.

Fitness – Encourage active play every day.

- Play outside, run, swim, dance.

To help with constipation, try this high-fiber recipe!

Berry Smoothie:

1/4 cup strawberries (fresh or frozen)

1/4 cup blueberries (fresh or frozen)

1/2 cup raspberries (fresh or frozen)

1/2 cup milk*

2 ounces plain yogurt*

**For children 2 years and older, choose low-fat milk and yogurt.*



Directions:

1. Combine all ingredients in a blender.
2. Blend until smooth.

This recipe makes one serving.

Calories 155, Fat 2.5g, Saturated Fat 1.2g, Protein 8.5g, Carbohydrate 26g, Fiber 5.7g, Sodium 110mg



FOODS WITH FIBER

Fruits	Vegetables	Legumes (Beans and Peas)	Whole Grains
Apple with skin	Broccoli	Kidney beans	Whole grain cereal (hot and cold)
Pear with skin	Carrots	Navy beans	Whole wheat bread
Orange	Cauliflower	Lentils	Whole wheat pasta
Raspberries	Potato with skin	Chickpeas	Brown rice

To prevent choking, serve all foods in the size and texture safe for your child.

Some steps that I am already taking: _____

New things that I will try: _____

You can do this! You are on the right track; small changes lead to success!

Talk with your nutritionist at WIC if you have questions about adding fiber and fluids to your child's diet. If you have further concerns about constipation or other health issues, contact your child's health care provider.

