

Dealing with Constipation

Incontinence can sometimes be aggravated by and increased pressure on the bladder, which can be associated with constipation. The impaction of hard stool in the colon can have an influence on the bladder's ability to function properly. Eating a well-balanced diet that is rich with fiber will help you overcome this problem. Keeping your body hydrated will also contribute to a healthier routine with regular bowel movements

It's important to choose foods that have fiber such as whole grain breaks, brown rice, fiber-rich cereals, raw fruits and vegetables, bran and apricots. Despite what a great reputation prunes to help bowel control, apricot juice is actually a higher fiber food and bladder-friendly. Another way to increase your fiber is by using special bran recipes.

HOW TO MAKE "SPECIAL BRAN RECIPE"

Mix together:

- 1 cup applesauce
- 1 cup coarse unprocessed wheat bran (You can buy unprocessed wheat bran in the grocery or health food stores. This type of bran is different from bran cereal.)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup prune juice

Take 2 tablespoons of the mixture every day. Take the mixture in the evening for a morning bowel movement. Increase the bran mixture by one tablespoon until your bowel movements become regular. If the amount exceeds four tablespoons, take the mixture in divided doses in the morning and evening. Always drink one large glass of water with the mixture.

WHAT IF I DON'T LIKE THE "SPECIAL BRAN RECIPE"

Add unprocessed wheat bran to your diet. Start by using 1 to 2 tablespoons every day. If necessary for regulation, increase bran slowly over several weeks to approximately 6 tablespoons every day. Mix bran in foods like applesauce, cereals, sauces, or use it as a spice in gravies, or puddings. Sprinkle bran on ice cream, vegetable and fruit salads, or cottage cheese. Add to muffins, breads, and cookies when baking.

OTHER "NATURAL REMEDIES" THAT MAY HELP

Here are several natural laxative recipes that have been shown to improve bowel function.

FRUIT SPREAD

- 1 lb raisins
- 1 lb currants
- 1 lb prunes
- 1 lb figs
- 1 lb dates
- One (1) 28-ounce container
- Undiluted prune concentrate

Put fruit through a grinder. Mix with prune concentrate in large mixer (mixture will be very thick.) Store in large-mouthed plastic container. Refrigerate this mixture.

POWER PUDDING

- ½ cup prune juice
- ½ cup applesauce
- ½ cup wheat bran flakes
- ½ cup whipped topping
- ½ cup stewed prunes (canned)

Blend ingredients. Take ¼ cup portions of recipe with breakfast. Regulate dose as needed. This mixture should be covered and refrigerated. You can keep mixture for one week.

WHEN WILL I NOTICE A CHANGE?

You may notice effects on bowel function 3 to 5 days after starting bran or other natural remedies. You should continue to use these remedies.

WILL BRAN & OTHER NATURAL REMEDIES HARM ME?

NO! The normal reaction to bran is stomach bloating and increased gas. These symptoms usually last for only the 1st week. If symptoms last longer, contact your nurse or doctor.

WHAT TYPE OF BOWEL MOVEMENT SCHEDULE SHOULD I FOLLOW?

Step 1. Try to have a bowel movement in a private place. The best time to move your bowels is after a meal, such as breakfast. Both eating and the smell of appetizing foods can cause your bowels to move. Drink a warm drink or eat warm food, with your breakfast will stimulate your bowels to move.

Step 2. Sit on the toilet or bedside commode 20 minutes after eating breakfast. Put your feet up on a footstool and push your body forward a little. Massage or rub your lower stomach to push the bowel movement into your rectum.

It may take about 20 to 30 minutes for you to have a bowel movement. A Glycerin or Dulcolax suppository or digital stimulation technique (putting your finger in your rectal opening) may be used to make it easier to move your bowels. Put the suppository in your rectum around 20 minutes before you want to have the bowel movement. It will take about 20 minutes for the suppository to melt and work.

WHAT DO I DO IF I HAVE SEVERE CONSTIPATION?

Some people have severe constipation that may result in "impaction" (stool hardens in your rectum and you can't get it out.) The following laxative combination can be used as a drink or an enema:

DRINK

½ cup milk

½ cup molasses (Grandma's)

Heat till warm and drink in the morning.

ENEMA

1 cup milk

1 cup molasses

Heat till warm and pour in a standard enema bag with rectal-tube tip. Let the enema flow into your rectum and try to hold it for 15 minutes. Sit on the toilet or a bedpan and expel contents of the enema. The enema works best if you keep it in for 15 minutes.

WILL BRAN HELP IF I HAVE DIARRHEA?

Yes, adding unprocessed wheat bran to your diet may add bulk up your stool decreasing the amount of liquid stool and diarrhea.