



Constipation

Constipation is when bowel movements occur less often and stool is harder and more difficult to move. Some cancer treatments, **pain medications**, and other medicines can cause constipation. It can also occur if you are less active or if your diet lacks enough fluid or fiber.

Suggestions for preventing and treating constipation:

- Drink plenty of fluids, at least eight 8-ounce glasses every day to help keep stool soft.
- Try having a hot drink about an hour before your usual time for a bowel movement.
- Get some exercise every day. Talk with your doctor about the amount and type of exercise that is right for you.
- Talk with your doctor to see if you can increase the fiber in your diet. High fiber foods include bran, whole wheat breads and cereals, raw or cooked vegetables, fresh and dried fruit, nuts, and popcorn.
- If you need information managing constipation, please refer to the **Constipation Management** handout in your education packet.

Notify your physician:

- If you notice blood in your stool or if your stool appears black in color.
- If you are unable to move your bowels.
- If you are nauseated or vomiting.
- If your abdomen is abnormally distended or firm.