



# CONSTIPATION IN ADULTS

## ARE YOU CONSTIPATED?

Some people do not have a bowel movement each day. If the stool is soft, you are probably not constipated. Constipation is a dry, hard stool that is difficult to pass. Avoid using laxatives, mineral oil, suppositories or enemas unless prescribed by a doctor. Check with your doctor to make sure the problem is constipation, and not something else.

## TO PREVENT CONSTIPATION:

- Get moving! Physical activity is needed for regular bowel movements.
- Drink six to eight 8-ounce cups of fluids like water or milk a day.
- Eating and drinking often stimulates bowel movements, so a good time to use the toilet may be after meals. Allow enough time to use the toilet.
- Slowly increase the amount of fiber you eat.

**Hint:** Too much dairy intake can contribute to constipation. Limit milk to 3 cups a day for adults.

## TO INCREASE FIBER:



- Eat more fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Eat beans, peas, or lentils at least once or twice a week.
- Choose whole grain bread, crackers, cereals, and pasta. Whole grains include whole wheat, rye, pumpernickel, graham, oatmeal, and bran. Be sure look to see that the first ingredient on the ingredient list is a whole grain.
- Try brown rice, quinoa, corn, or whole wheat tortillas.
- Substitute whole wheat flour for ¼ to ½ of the white flour in recipes.
- Read bread labels carefully. Look for “100% whole wheat flour” instead of “enriched wheat flour” or “wheat flour.”

To learn more about WIC and locate a clinic near you, please visit [signupwic.com](http://signupwic.com).

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