

Name:

Date:

## Constipation Nutrition Therapy

### What is constipation?

Constipation is infrequent bowel movements or difficult passage of stools that persists for several weeks or longer. It is generally described as having fewer than three bowel movements a week.

### Causes

Constipation most commonly occurs when waste or stool moves too slowly through the digestive tract or cannot be eliminated effectively from the rectum, which may cause the stool to become hard and dry.

Some possible causes include:

- Blockage in the colon or rectum
- Problems with the nerves around the colon and rectum
- Conditions that affect hormones in the body
- Diabetes
- Overactive / Underactive parathyroid gland
- Pregnancy

### Recommendations

- 1 Include plenty of high-fiber foods in your diet, including beans, vegetables, fruits, whole grain cereals and bran.
- 2 Drink plenty of fluids.
- 3 Stay as active as possible and try to get regular exercise.
- 4 Try to manage stress.
- 5 Don't ignore the urge to pass stool.
- 6 Try to create a regular schedule for bowel movements, especially after a meal.

## High Fiber Food

- Grains**
- ½ cup-½ cup high-fiber cereal. Check Nutrition Facts labels and choose products with 4 grams dietary fiber or more per serving.
  - ½ cup cooked red beans, kidney beans, large lima beans, navy beans, pinto beans, white beans, lentils, or black-eyed peas
  - 1 bagel (7-12cm diameter)
  - 1 slice whole wheat bread
  - 2-inch square cornbread
  - 4 whole wheat crackers
  - ½ cup cereal with 3 grams fiber per serving (check dietary fiber on the product's Nutrition Facts label)
  - 1 tablespoons bran, rice, or wheat cereal

- Vegetables**
- 1 artichoke (cooked)
  - ½ cup bean sprouts (raw)
  - ½ cup beets (diced, canned)
  - ½ cup broccoli, brussels sprouts, or cabbage (cooked)
  - ½ cup carrots, cauliflower, corn, eggplant, okra (boiled), potatoes (baked or mashed)
  - ½ cup spinach, kale, or turnip greens (cooked) — winter, summer, or zucchini (cooked), sweet potatoes, tomatoes (canned)

- Fruits**
- 1 apple or ½ cup applesauce, ½ cup apricots (canned), 1 banana, ½ cup cherries (canned or fresh), ½ cup cranberries (fresh), 3 dates (whole), 2 medium figs (fresh), ½ cup fruit cocktail (canned), ½ grapefruit, 1 kiwi fruit, 1 orange
  - 1 fresh peach, 1 pear (fresh), 1 plum, ¼ cup raisins, ½ cup strawberries (fresh)
  - ½ cup blackberries or raspberries

- Other**
- 2 tablespoons almonds or peanuts
  - 1 cup popcorn (popped)