

Alleviating Constipation:

Constipation can be an annoying, frustrating or even life threatening at times

As silly and simple as it sounds, A lot of my clients suffer from constipation and a lack of healthy gastrointestinal motility alongside having subclinical dehydration.

Did you know that Diverticulosis (pockets in the intestine_ are by far the most common cause for constipation by creating massive amounts of pressure in the colon.

Please remember we need things like electrolytes to bulk up a healthy stool and a good balance of potassium and calcium and lack of magnesium is often a cause for chronic constipation especially if you are using excessive calcium supplements. Excess calcium overpowers the effect of magnesium which leads to dysmotility.

Certain microbes produce high level of gas called Methane and methane stimulates the enteric nervous system, An important neurotransmitter for motility, But yes, A microbial imbalance in the gut can be a driver for constipation,

Another thing that can be a driving force for chronic constipation is lack of rest and rejuvenation and this where functional medicine shines through by diving deep beyond the diagnosis and bringing them relief.

We are brought in a culture of instant gratification and expectations for healing times are very quick courtesy of the pharmaceutical industry where an Advil and a Pepto Bismol gives you relief within minutes.

Hypermotility can result in diarrhoea or very loose stool which can be easily be called nutrient deficiency because we don't have any time to absorb nutrition and chronic constipation can be a reflection of a disease elsewhere in the body.

Hydration and Fiber are important but often they are overemphasised in a few cases. If someone has hypothyroidism and if you keep giving them fiber, They are going to

feel worse because the microbes are going to be over feasting on too much starch creating gas.

I am not against medications because in acute cases, It can be life saving, but I feel they are overused and over prescribed by well intentioned medical practitioners without understanding the root causes.

A lot of fiber supplements are loaded with artificial sweeteners , artificial preservatives, colors and flavors and there is absolutely no need for it to taste like orange. Talking about Fiber, There are two types.

Soluble Fiber- Like Oats, Bananas, and Psyllium husk

Insoluble Fiber- like Groundflaxseed

Soluble Fiber absorbs water and can bulk up a stool and make a stool soft, So that's it's easy to pass. Insoluble fiber helps to move the stool along and is best suited for those who have infrequent bowel movements.

So, depending upon whether a person has constipation, that looks like a water blend or someone who has a hard time passing a stool, You may want to use the type that will actually help the most.

Majority of root causes of Constipation range from

Excessive Vitamin

Hypothyroidism

SIBO (Small intestine bacterial overgrowth)

Dysbiosis (Low good bacteria)

Food Sensitivity

Insufficient water

Fiber Stress

Now, That I have given you an overview of the causes, Let's look at some of the solutions towards bringing relief.

Prunes work not because they are high in fiber, But because they are high in sugar alcohol, But it is contraindicated with SIBO- small intestine bacterial overgrowth, But generally for others it is beneficial.

Olive oil

Extra virgin olive oil promotes peristalsis (Wave like contractions pushing food through the digestive system) because of the polyphenol content not because it is a high fat food. Coffee also stimulates the system in a similar way because of it's polyphenol content.

STRESS

A huge driver for constipation and this certainly not something we should be joking about. This is a serious issue for someone dealing with chronic stress. Stress control techniques like this help in a myriad of ways to relax the nervous system and the GI tract.

Eating Hygiene

This is something I talk about over and over again as chewing while being in a relaxed state of mind are the only two voluntary actions in the whole digestive process.

Magnesium

Magnesium can be customised for where people need it. The most common that is used is Citrate and the second would be Oxide

If a person has other sorts of deficiency like cramping and hypertension, But they have perfect bowel movements, Don't take these or it might mess up those stools. You might want to consider magnesium sulphate or even a Epsom Salt bath might suffice.

Psyllium Husk is a good source of soluble fiber, But excess can create a whole lot of IBS symptoms and those dealing with cramping.

1tsp every few days making sure they are drinking water first.

Water

Now, Most people who come to my practice are overly dehydrated and whoever said 8 glasses of water per day just made it up. If you're eating water rich vegetables and beverages, You won't need that much water versus if you eat a lot of processed food and beverages like Coffee 3*times a day

Healthy Fats like cold pressed seed oils, Nut butters, Olive oil to help lubricate the stool. Good fats are your friend! Don't alienate them from your diet.

Lastly, Ayurvedic super herb for Digestive health, Triphala consumed in warm water or plant based milk helps ease your bowel movement in the morning. Also, if you aren't lactose intolerant, You can mix pure organic Grass fed Ghee with a glass of warm milk the night before to bring some ease and relief. If you're a Vegan, You can choose almond milk instead of Grass fed milk and add a tsp of Cold pressed coconut oil.

I hope you have a better understanding of the drivers of chronic constipation and the knowledge to conquer it successfully. For an individualized custom consultation, Feel free to reach out by booking an appointment to address your unique case and concerns.

If you found this information useful, Please share it with your family, friends and colleagues.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to be of service.