

What should I know about constipation?



Definition of constipation?

Constipation is defined medically as fewer than three stools per week and severe **constipation** as less than one **stool** per week. Some of the symptoms of constipation include lower abdominal discomfort, a sense of incomplete evacuation (the feeling that you still have to "go") after a bowel movement, straining to have a bowel movement, hard or small stools, **rectal bleeding** and/or anal fissures caused by hard stools, physiological distress and/or obsession with having bowel movements.



What causes constipation?

Constipation usually is caused by the slow movement of material through the colon (large bowel). Two disorders that cause constipation are colonic inertia and pelvic floor dysfunction. There are many causes of and associations with constipation, for example, medications; poor bowel habits; low **fiber** diets; possibly abuse of laxatives; hormonal disorders; diseases primarily of other parts of the body that also affect the colon; and high levels of estrogen and **progesterone** during **pregnancy**.

What are the signs and symptoms of constipation?

Signs and symptoms of constipation may include **rectal bleeding** and/or anal fissures that are caused by hard or small stools, lower abdominal discomfort, and straining to have a bowel movement. Call your doctor or other health care professional for treatment for constipation if you have a sudden onset of symptoms that come on suddenly that are severe **pain** that worsens and are associated with other worrisome symptoms such as suddenly losing weight, or is not responding to simple, safe and effective treatments.

What are the diagnostic procedures for constipation?

Tests to diagnose the cause of constipation may include a medical history, physical examination, blood tests, abdominal **X-rays**, **barium enema**, colonic transit studies, defecography, anorectal motility studies, and colonic motility studies.



What are the goals for constipation therapy?

There are several principles in approaching the evaluation and treatment of constipation. The first principle is to differentiate between acute (recent onset) and chronic (long duration) constipation.

Start treatment early of constipation and use the treatments that have the least potential for harm, which will prevent constipation from worsening, and it will prevent potential damage to the colon that can be caused by the frequent use of stimulant products. Evaluation for the cause of chronic constipation needs to be done if there is no response to the simple treatments.

Is there a special [diet](#) for it?

There is no special diet but treatment may include foods with high in fiber, non-stimulant laxatives, stimulant laxatives, enemas, prescription medications, and if required a surgery. Stimulant laxatives, including natural or herbal products, these should be used only if you have your [food sensitivity test](#) report and found to be non-reactive to such fiber foods or else they might damage the colon and worsen constipation.

Thus, with acute constipation or constipation that is worsening, it is necessary to assess for the cause early so as not to overlook a serious illness that should be treated urgently. Increased [gas](#) ([flatulence](#)) is a common symptom and side effect of high-fiber diets.

The gas occurs because the bacteria normally present within the colon are capable of digesting fiber to a small extent. The bacteria produce gas as a byproduct of their [digestion](#) it. All fibers, no matter what their source, can cause [flatulence](#). However, since bacteria vary in their ability to digest the various types of fiber, the different sources of it may produce different amounts of gas. To complicate the situation, the ability of bacteria to digest one type can vary from individual to individual. This variability makes the selection of the best type of fiber for each individual more difficult.

How is it cured?

Thus, we suggest knowing your foods which are easily digested by your own digestive system than just guess working! The right food at right time can solve many initial stage constipation related issues.

[Nutrigene India health services](#) are specialized in finding out your adverse foods. Know early and treat early signs of constipation. Happy reading!!