



Care Hub

FIELD NOTES

PRACTICAL HEALTH TIPS
FROM KAREN

When "Going Every Day" Doesn't Tell the Whole Story

LET'S TALK ABOUT CONSTIPATION

Many people think they can't be constipated if they had a bowel movement yesterday. The truth is, you can still be constipated and not even know it.



Your colon (large intestine) is designed to hold a large amount of stool. Over time, it can stretch and hold a surprising amount—especially in people with chronic constipation.

A healthy gut is the foundation of overall health.



WHAT IS CONSTIPATION?

Constipation isn't just about how often you have a bowel movement. It can also mean:

- Hard stools
- Straining
- Feeling like you didn't completely empty
- Going several days between bowel movements
- Passing only small amounts at a time

MYTH vs. FACT

MYTH

"I pooped yesterday, so I'm not constipated."

FACT

You can have a bowel movement every day and still be constipated if your colon isn't emptying completely.



SIGNS YOU MAY BE CONSTIPATED

- ✓ Hard stools
- ✓ Straining
- ✓ Feeling "backed up"
- ✓ Bloating
- ✓ Abdominal discomfort
- ✓ Feeling full quickly
- ✓ Needing laxatives often



WHY IT HAPPENS

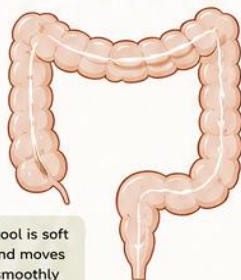
- Not enough fiber
- Not enough water
- Certain medications
- Changes in routine or travel
- Pregnancy
- Lack of activity
- Some medical conditions

WHAT'S HAPPENING INSIDE?

THE PATH OF STOOL THROUGH YOUR COLON

MOVING THROUGH

A healthy colon moves stool along efficiently so waste can leave your body.



Stool is soft and moves smoothly through the colon.

BACKED UP

Stool sits in the colon too long, absorbing water and becoming hard and difficult to pass.



Over time, the colon can stretch and hold a large amount of stool.

You can pass small amounts of stool while a much larger amount remains behind.

5 THINGS THAT HELP

- 1 Drink enough fluids. Water helps keep stool soft.
- 2 Increase fiber gradually. Aim for 25–30 grams per day.
- 3 Walk every day. Movement helps keep things moving!
- 4 Don't ignore the urge to go. Go when your body tells you.
- 5 Talk to your provider before using stimulant laxatives regularly.

Small changes can lead to big relief!



WHEN TO CALL YOUR PROVIDER

- Blood in the stool
- Unintentional weight loss
- Severe abdominal pain
- Vomiting
- Constipation lasting several weeks
- Pencil-thin stools
- New constipation after age 50

Don't ignore changes in your bowel habits—they can be an important clue to your health.



KAREN'S TAKEAWAY



One of the biggest misconceptions I hear is, "I can't be constipated—I went yesterday." Having a bowel movement doesn't always mean your colon has emptied well. If you're constantly bloated, straining, or never feel "finished," your body may be telling you something important. Let's work together to get your gut working the way it should.

I'm here to help you feel your best.
Karen



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