



Pediatric Constipation Education

What is constipation?

Constipation is the abnormally delayed or infrequent passage of hard stools. Most children become constipated from time to time. Although it can be uncomfortable, may create worry, and sometimes seem serious, fortunately it does not have long-term, trouble effects in most children.

How often should my child be having a bowel movement?

The consistency and frequency of stools varies depending on age and type of feeding received. Refer to the chart below for more detailed information:

Age	Consistency	Range of Stools per Day
Infant: Breast-fed Formula-fed	Loose to watery Pasty	3 to 8 1 to 3
1 year	Pasty to formed	1 to 4
2 to 5 years	Varies	0 to 3
Above 5 years	Varies	0 to 3

What are the symptoms of constipation?

Symptoms associated with constipation include:

- Stomachaches
- Decreased appetite and eating
- Abdominal fullness
- Small amounts of blood passed within or just after the stool
- Smears or leaking of stool into underwear
- Repeated urinary infections

How can I treat and prevent constipation?

Specific treatment of constipation should be discussed with your child's physician. However, dietary changes may help prevent the reoccurrence of constipation. For toddlers and older children, fruit juices help provide the stool with extra water making it looser and softer. In addition, increasing fiber containing foods in your child's diet will assist in better bowel function.

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