

# healthy habits using SMART approach

The best way to prevent constipation is to practice healthy habits and talk with your health care provider. This can be done with the SMART approach.



**s**

## sitting

Get kids into the habit of going to the bathroom. If your child fights the urge to go to the bathroom, have them sit on the toilet for at least 10 minutes at about the same time each day (it is best to do this, after a meal).

If needed, eat breakfast a little earlier to give your child a chance for a relaxed visit to the bathroom before school.

The use of a foot stool may help your child have proper potty position.



**m**

## meals

Have a regular meal schedule. Eating makes your bowels move so you can poop. So, eating regular meals may help kids develop routine bowel habits.

Add fiber rich foods to your child's diet. High-fiber foods such as apples, pears, beans, oatmeal, oranges, whole grains breads and popcorn may prevent constipation.



**a**

## adequate fluids

Drinking enough water and other liquids helps poop move more easily through the body. Your child should drink:

- 1-2 years old: 3-4 cups of water each day
- 2-4 years old: 4 cups of water each day
- 5-10 years old: 6 cups of water each day



**r**

## recognition

Common signs of constipation in kids include:

- Pooping less than usual
- Having trouble or pain when going to the bathroom
- Feeling full or bloated
- Straining to poop
- Seeing a little blood on the toilet paper
- Stool or poop accidents in underwear



**t**

## talking

It can be hard for kids to talk about their poop. This can make them not tell you they are having trouble.

Consider using the choose your poo chart (*located on the back*) to help talk about poop when you notice symptoms.

See back for medications and dosing

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## managing constipation at home

Your insurance may pay for over-the-counter medicine to help with constipation. Some covered medicines include:

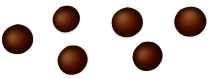

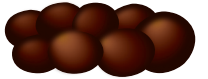




- Ex-Lax®
- MiraLax®
- DulcoLax®
- Colace®

Talk to your child's provider about proper dosages and which one is the right one for them!

green zone	medicines	instructions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poops each day or every other day.</li> <li>• Poop is soft; no straining when pooping and no poop accidents (no smears or soiled underwear)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take your <b>GREEN</b> medicines each day as prescribed.</li> </ul>
yellow zone	medicines	instructions
<p>Child has not pooped in 2-3 days. Poop is hard, child strains or pushes to poop. Has poop accidents (smears or soiled underwear).</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take your <b>YELLOW</b> medicines as instructed until you are back in the GREEN zone.</li> <li>• If you are not in the <b>GREEN</b> zone in 2 days, please go to the <b>RED</b> zone.</li> <li>• Please call the nurse or send a MyChart message with questions.</li> </ul>
red zone	medicines	instructions
<p>No poop in 4-5 days or poop is hard, child strains or has pain when pooping. Has a lot of poop accidents (smears / or soiled underwear).</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Please call your provider before starting your clean out</b></li> <li>• Take your <b>RED</b> medicines as instructed for a clean out.</li> <li>• If clean out does not work or symptoms get worse please call your nurse or send a MyChart message.</li> </ul>

Content provided by Partners For Kids, an affiliate of Nationwide Children's Hospital.

## choose your poo

1		looks like: <b>rabbit droppings</b> separate hard lumps, like nuts (hard to pass)	5		looks like: <b>chicken nuggets</b> soft blobs with clear cut edges (passes easily)
2		looks like: <b>bunch of grapes</b> sausage-shaped but lumpy	6		looks like: <b>porridge</b> soft blobs with clear cut edges (passes easily)
3		looks like: <b>corn on cob</b> like sausage but with cracks on its surface	7		looks like: <b>gravy</b> watery, no solids passes entirely liquid
4		looks like: <b>sausage</b> like a sausage or snake, smooth and soft	<p>The paediatric scale is the concept of D.C.A Candy and Emma Davey based upon the scale collaborations of Norgine and Dr. Ken Heaton. The Bristol Stool Form Scale is © The Rome Foundation, Inc. and is used with permission.</p>		