

CONSTIPATION PREVENTION PLAN



- The goal is to have a bowel movement every 1 to 2 days. All dietary intervention, such as increasing fluids, prune pudding, pear juice... should be tried before using stool softeners or suppositories. Please consult with your dietitian or physician before using over the counter medications such as stool softeners, suppositories and enemas.

Prune Pudding Recipe

2 cups of raisins 4 cups of water
3 ¼ cups prunes ¼ cup honey
1 tablespoon vanilla ½ cup apple juice

Bring the water, raisins and prunes to a boil in a medium saucepan. Reduce heat to medium and cook until raisins and prunes are softened. Drain water.

Transfer raisins and prunes to a medium size bowl. Add honey, vanilla and apple juice. Blend to a pudding consistency. Consume a few tablespoons to 1 cup per day as tolerated. Store remaining prune pudding in a covered container in the refrigerator.

Step 1: Increase fluid intake. Consume at least 64 ounces of fluid every day. Limit your intake of fluids that contain caffeine, such as coffee, soda and tea.

Step 2: Increase fiber intake ONLY if fluid intake is sufficient. Too much fiber in the diet without adequate fluids will lead to increased constipation. Read the “Nutrition Facts” label on all food items for fiber content. Refer to the box below for how much fiber you should be consuming. Good sources of fiber include, but are not limited to: fruit, vegetables, whole wheat bread, oatmeal, high fiber cereal, whole wheat crackers, pretzels and popcorn. Bran may also be added to food. Slowly increase fiber intake by 3-5 grams per day to prevent discomfort.

Step 3: Physical activity promotes regularity Participate in 20-30 minutes of exercise at least 3 to 4 days per week.

Step 4: The following foods may produce bowel movements and should be incorporated into the diet if constipation persists: prune juice, pear juice, prune pudding (recipe above), figs and dates. Warm beverages or warm bathes can stimulate bowel movements as well.

Step 5: If constipation continues after steps 1 through 4 have been tried then contact your dietitian or physician for further recommendations. Constipation is a serious issue. If untreated can lead to a bowel impaction which requires hospitalization. Contact your nurse or dietitian immediately if you have not had a bowel movement in 3-4 days.

Recommended Fiber Intake

| | <u>Age</u> | <u>Grams/Day</u> |
|----------------|------------|------------------|
| | 1-3yrs | 19 grams |
| | 4-8yrs | 25 grams |
| Male: | 9-13yrs | 31 grams |
| | 14-50yrs | 38 grams |
| | 50-70yrs | 30 grams |
| | >70yrs | 30 grams |
| Female: | 9-18yrs | 26 grams |
| | 19-50yrs | 25 grams |
| | 50-70yrs | 21 grams |
| | >70yrs | 21 grams |