








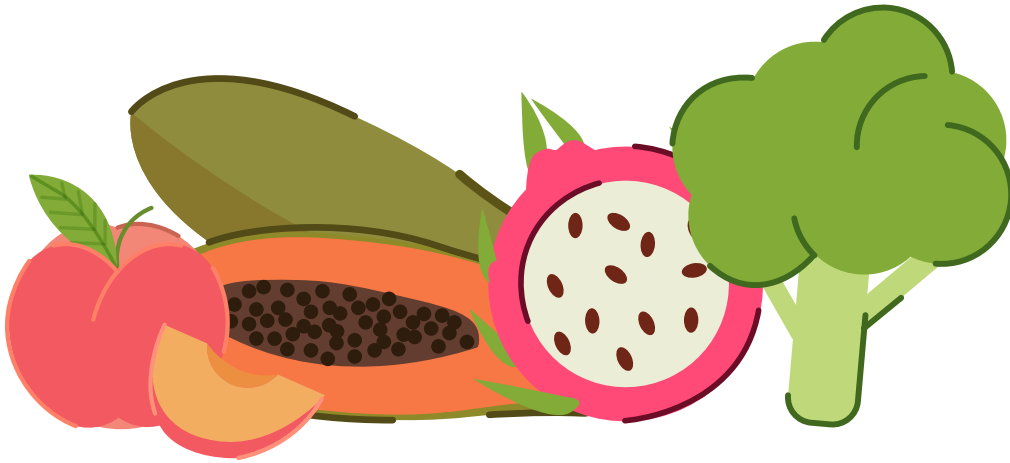


MANAGING CONSTIPATION IN YOUR CHILD

Monitor your child's stool pattern. Aim for type 3 or 4 stools passed daily to every 2-3 days.

Bristol Stool Chart

Type 1		Separate hard lumps, like nuts (hard to pass)
Type 2		Sausage-shaped but lumpy
Type 3		Like a sausage but with cracks on the surface
Type 4		Like a sausage or snake, smooth and soft
Type 5		Soft blobs with clear-cut edges
Type 6		Fluffy pieces with ragged edges, a mushy stool
Type 7		Watery, no solid pieces. Entirely Liquid



Dietary modifications to relieve constipation:

- At least two servings of fruit each day – fruits with the peel left on, such as plums, prunes, raisins, apricots and peaches, have a lot of fibre. Pears, papayas and red dragonfruit are helpful too.
- Prune juice is a mild, natural laxative. Serve 3–4 tablespoons once or twice a day. Mixing it with another juice may be more palatable.
- At least three servings of spinach, green leafy vegetables or broccoli each day.
- Avoid processed foods and processed cereals.
- Reduce starchy foods such as potatoes and bananas which bulk up stools further.
- If your child is over the age of 18 months, reduce cow's milk intake to a maximum of 500 ml per day.
- Increased total fluids per day. Eg. 10kg child needs 1 litre of total fluids, 15kg child 1.25 litres, 20kg child 1.5 litres.
- **Increased fibre without sufficient fluids may worsen constipation!**
- Ensure your child has undistracted potty time for 3–5 minutes 2 to 3 times a day after meals.
- Smaller children will need a footstool to rest their feet on so that their legs are in a crouched position when on the potty.



Medications:

- **Laxatives** may be required to help soften the poo to allow easier passage and clearance of backed up constipated poo.
- **Laxatives** do not get absorbed. Too much laxative might cause watery poo and the dosage might need to be reduced.
- Dosage should be increased if poo continues to be hard.
- Eg. **Mild laxative – lactulose (Duphalac)** to be taken twice daily regularly till type 3 or 4 stools daily or every other day stools are passed.
- Continue on lactulose till there is a regular bowel pattern for at least 2 weeks before gradually reducing the dose to once daily.
- Keep on this dose for another 2 weeks before cutting down further to alternate day.
- If constipation recurs, go back up one step and remain there longer. Eg. **More potent laxative – Forlax.**
- Start with 1 sachet dissolved in 120ml to be taken within 1 hour.
- By the 2nd consecutive day of 1 sachet if no stools are passed, increase to 2 sachets daily (in 200ml of water).
- Continue on the lowest effective dose to maintain type 4 stools regularly for 2-3 week before gradually reducing dose.
- Eg from 1 sachet to half sachet daily for another 3 weeks.
- Wean further to alternate day dosing for 2 weeks before attempting to stop.