

Preventing and Managing Constipation in Chronic Kidney Disease (Not for Dialysis Patients)

First, try being more physically active and changing your eating habits.

- › **Add fibre slowly over time and eat it throughout the day instead of all at once.** This can help to avoid gas, bloating, more constipation (not being able to poop), or diarrhea (loose, watery poop).
- › **As you add fibre, make sure you drink more water.** Water helps to pass fibre through your digestive system (bowels). Drink enough water to keep your urine (pee) light yellow.

Best choices for high fibre foods

For people with no potassium or phosphorus diet limits:	For people who need a low potassium diet:	For people who need a low phosphorus diet:
Fruit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pears with skin • Dates • Figs • Berries (blackberries, strawberries, blueberries) • Apricots (dried or canned) • Prunes 	Fruit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apples with skin • Blueberries • Pears • Prunes (no more than 3 a day) • Cherries (no more than 10 a day) 	Fruit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pears with skin • Dates • Figs • Berries (blackberries, strawberries, blueberries), 1 cup • Apricots (dried or canned)
Vegetables and pulses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baked potatoes with skin • Black-eyed peas • Navy beans • Kidney beans • Lentils 	Vegetables and pulses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asparagus • Carrots • Cabbage, cooked • Cauliflower 	Vegetables and pulses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baked potatoes with skin • Carrots • Cabbage, cooked • Cauliflower

For people with no potassium or phosphorus diet limits:	For people who need a low potassium diet:	For people who need a low phosphorus diet:
<p>Grains and cereals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% whole wheat bran bread • Cracked wheat bread • Brown rice • Bulgur • Quaker® Corn Bran Squares™ cereal • Kellogg's® All-Bran® Original cereal • Kellogg's® All-Bran Buds® cereal • General Mills Fibre One™ cereal 	<p>Grains and cereals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Popcorn (2 cups, popped) • Cream of Wheat® Hot Cereal (2/3 cup, cooked) • Oatmeal (1/2 cup, cooked) • Bran cereal (3 Tbsp, sprinkled on other cereal) 	<p>Grains and cereals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Popcorn (2 cups, popped) • Cream of Wheat® Hot Cereal (2/3 cup, cooked) • Oatmeal (1/2 cup, cooked) • Bran cereal (3 Tbsp, sprinkled on other cereal)

Fibre supplements: For mild constipation, try Metamucil® Dietary Supplement or Benefibre® Fibre Supplement.








- › Start at the smallest dose (amount).
- › Follow the label directions for how much water to drink and how to slowly increase the dose over time.

Laxatives:

- PEG (polyethylene glycol) 3350 (osmotic)
 - › Starting dose: 17 grams in the morning
- Lactulose (laxative)
 - › Starting dose: 15 to 30 ml in the morning
- Senokot® (stimulant)
 - › Starting dose: 1 to 2 tablets at bedtime
- **Do not** take fibre supplements, stool softeners, or laxatives if you have stomach pain, nausea (feeling sick to your stomach), or vomiting (throwing up).
- Only certain bowel preparations are recommended with chronic kidney disease (like PegLyte®).
- Avoid Pico-Salax®, Fleet® Laxative Saline Enemas, and other preparations.

Questions? Call your primary health care provider (family doctor or nurse practitioner) or the Kidney Health Clinic (see back page).

Bristol Stool Chart

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

Types 1 and 2 are both **constipated** types of stools (poops).

- This may be because you are not eating enough fibre and are drinking less liquids. The stools have spent a lot of time in the colon, where their fluids get reabsorbed (taken in again). This makes them hard and round, like small nuts.
- Types 1 and 2 may take more time to pass. There may be many days between your bowel movements (poops).

Types 3 and 4 are the **best** types of stools.

- They are usually a sign that your food and liquid intake is good and your gastrointestinal (GI) tract is working the way it should.
- Stools are passed regularly and easily, usually every day.

Types 5, 6, and 7 are types of **diarrhea**.

- They may happen because of:
 - › Stomach upset
 - › An infection or other condition
 - › Taking too many stool softener or laxative doses
- You may need to poop often or suddenly. **Call your primary health care provider or the Kidney Health Clinic if your stools are still soft or runny:**
 - › After an upset stomach that does not get better
 - › After stopping or taking less stool softeners or laxatives.

*Bristol Stool Chart used with permission of Dr. Dan Heaton, University of Bristol, 1997.

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This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

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Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

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