

GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING CONSTIPATION

- * Increase fluids to at least six to eight glasses per day.
- * Eat a diet high in fiber.
- * Eat fresh fruits, fruit juices, and vegetables.
- * Avoid pasta, pastries, cheese, rice, and foods with white sugar.
- * Exercise regularly.
- * Establish a regular time for defecation. (Best times for evacuations are usually after a meal.
- * Drink warm prune juice or other warm beverages one hour before scheduled defecation time to stimulate urge.
- * Use toilet or bedside commode instead of a bedpan if possible. (Ideal position is a modified squatting position with feet placed on a stool.)
- * Relax by reading or listening to music in the bathroom.
- * Allow sufficient time in the bathroom.
- * Don't delay when you have the urge to evacuate.
- * Avoid laxative and enema abuse.
- * Take stool softeners, suppositories or laxatives as ordered. (Overuse of laxatives can cause constipation.)
- * Use enemas or manual disimpaction for severe constipation.
- * Report constipation that frequently reoccurs or that does not respond to treatment to physician.