

Constipation & Your Child

What is Constipation?

Best defined as hard/dry stools, cranky behavior, stomach pain, painful/infrequent bowel movements, and poor appetite.

Common Causes:

In infants and children, common causes include transitioning to new foods, illness/disease, and lacking adequate fluids and fiber.

Increase Fluid Needs:

Fluids are vital to help children “go”. Fluids help with movement and softening of stools. Check out the table below for the adequate intake amounts of fluids per day for a certain age group!

Adequate Intake			
Age	Liters	Cups	Ounces
0-6 months	.7	3	24
7-12 months	.8	3.5	28
1-3 years	1.3	5.5	44
4-8 years	1.7	7	56

Increase Fiber Needs:

Fiber is present in various foods and helps keep stools moving, soft and easier to pass. Daily fiber for a child under 2 years old is 5 grams/day. Check out the table below for the fiber content of some common food items!

Foods	Grams of Fiber
Fruits	
1 Medium Apple	4.5 grams
Peach with Skin	2.1 grams
Vegetables	
1 cup Broccoli	2 grams
1 cup Carrots	4.6 grams
Grains	
1 slice Whole Grain Bread	2 grams
1 cup Whole Wheat Cereal	3 grams

Helpful Tips:

- Constipation is different for every infant or child
- Never use over the counter laxatives, always seek healthcare providers help first
- Do not use karo/corn syrup to treat constipation
- Keep in mind “P” foods like: prunes, plums, peaches, and pears to help improve constipation