

Constipation Treatment

A few important facts for all parents

1. Please keep your follow up appointment. It is natural to forget medications and fiber once your child starts feeling better; however, children with constipation will develop problems again if medication is stopped.
2. If you have any questions or concerns please contact your physician at 251-434-3475.
3. It is important that your child has a bowel movement every day. It is better to have too many bowel movements than to have too few. If your child is not having bowel movements please call your physician.
4. Most children have to take their medications for 6 to 12 months in order to retrain their gut. Please do not stop medication unless directed by your physician.
5. Remember that children with constipation may have intermittent complaints of abdominal pain for 4 to 6 weeks after starting treatment. If the complaint is new or more severe than usual please call your physician.

Please follow ONLY the instructions circled by your physician

Enemas

What kind and why?

Milk and molasses enemas work better than any enema that can be bought. The high sugar content of the molasses allows the hard impacted stool to be softened so that it can pass easier.

How do I make it?

The recipe is a half and half mixture of whole milk and molasses.

How much do I give?

For younger children (Less than
Mix 12 ounces of milk and 12 ounces of molasses then give 4 ounces as an enema. This should be repeated 6 times to use all of the mixture. Parents should try to give the full amount if it goes in easily, but less if the child becomes uncomfortable and unable to hold the enema in. Parents should try to give at least 2 ounces.

For older children (greater than
Mix 24 ounces of milk and 24 ounces of molasses then give 6 to 8 ounces as an enema. This should be repeated 6 times to use all of the mixture. Parents should try to give the full amount if it goes in easily, but less if the child becomes uncomfortable and unable to hold the enema in. Parents should try to give at least 4 ounces.

How often do I give the enemas?

Twice a day for 3 days

Three times a day for 2 days

Every 4 hours until mixture is gone

How do I give an enema?

1. Have your child lie on his stomach with his knees pulled under him.
2. Lubricate the enema tube or nozzle with k-y jelly and gently put it 1 and 1/2 inches to 2 inches into the rectum.
3. If you are giving a homemade enema, put the solution into the enema bag. The fluid will flow down gradually by gravity. Keep the enema bag no more than 2 feet above the level of your child's bottom.
4. When the bag is empty, remove the tube.
5. Your child should wait to go to the bathroom until he feels a strong need to have a bowel movement (in about 2 to 10 minutes).
6. If the enema equipment is disposable, throw it away. If it is reusable, clean the tube as best you can with an antibacterial soap and water. Then sterilize it by putting it in boiling water for 10 minutes. The enema bag just needs to be rinsed with water.

Miralax

What is miralax?

Miralax is a polyethylene glycol preparation that comes as a powder and is tasteless and gritless. It can be used to help clean out the colon. It can be mixed in water or gatorade. It is important to take all of the miralax that your physician orders in the time frame your physician wants. Sipping on miralax will not work.

How much do I give?

Clean out

1 capful (17 grams) in 8 ounces of liquid every 10 to 15 minutes for a total of 15 glasses. This must be taken within a 4 hour period.

Maintenance Dose

In young children

2 level teaspoons or $\frac{1}{2}$ a capful in 4 ounces of liquid twice a day.

In older children

1 capful in 8 ounces of liquid twice a day.

How do I know when my child is getting the right amount?

Your child should have at least 2 to 3 soft to loose stools a day. If your child is having watery stools please contact your physician to adjust the dose of medication. Often times parents think they are giving too much medicine because of their child is having frequent loose stools or some abdominal cramping. However, the child can still be full of excess stool.

If your child does not want to have a bowel movement at school you may give a dose of Miralax when your child comes home and the second dose at bedtime. Your child will then likely have a bowel movement after supper and in the morning.

Magnesium Citrate/ Milk of Magnesia

Why use this?

Some children do not want to take the large amount of volume required to complete a Miralax clean. You may use Magnesium citrate or MOM instead. Remember that Miralax works the best of the three.

How much Magesium citrate do I give?

1 ounces per year of age (maximum is 10 ounces) every day for 3 days.

How much Milk of Magnesia do I give?

Clean out dose is 3 tablespoons twice day for 3 days

Maintenance dose is:

Children younger than 5 years old, 2 teaspoons twice a day. Children older than 5 years old, 1 tablespoon twice a day. The goal is for the child to have 2 to 3 soft bowel movements a day. If your child is not reaching this goal, please contact your physician for a dose adjustment.

Senna Laxative

What is senna laxative?

Senna is a natural plant laxative. It is both a mild irritant and a stimulant to the colon. It can help improve the colon's ability to contract. It is typically used when miralax alone is not working.

Where do I find Senna?

Senna is sold as Senokot and as a generic. The generic brand works just as well and costs less. Senna comes as both tablets and granules.

How much do I give?

1 tablet or 1 teaspoon twice a day

2 tablets or 2 teaspoons twice a day

How do give it to my child?

Children may swallow the tablet whole. If your child cannot swallow a tablet you may crush the tablet and mix it with chocolate syrup to hide the bitter taste. Do not let your child chew the tablet because it tastes very bitter. You may also buy senna in the granule form and mix it in chocolate milk.

Will my child become addicted to laxatives?

Not if the child eats a high fiber diet and is weaned off the medication in 6 to 12 months.

Lactulose

What is lactulose?

Lactulose is a very sweet tasting medication which has a nonabsorbable sugar. This sugars works to soften the stool. It is a prescription medication. You usually have to use senna or milk of magnesia with lactulose in order to have the best results.

How much do I give?

For toddlers, 2 teaspoons twice a day. For older children 1 tablespoon twice a day.

High Fiber Diet

Why is this important?

Fiber will help prevent future problems. However, it will not help treat the immediate constipation problem that your child currently has.

What is fiber?

Fiber is found in the peeling of plant products. Bran has the most fiber. Bran muffins are a good source and taste good as well. Fiber helps the colon work better and may be helpful in lowering cholesterol.

How much fiber do I need to give my child?

Children 1 to 5 years old need 10 grams of fiber a day.

Children 6 to 10 years old need 15 grams of fiber a day.

Children 11 to 12 years old need 20 grams of fiber a day.

Children 13 to 18 years old need 25 to 30 grams of fiber a day.