



Constipation



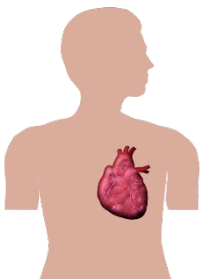
Most people go for a poo fairly regularly - it might be every day or every other day



It doesn't matter as long as you are healthy and poo at least **3** times a week



If this changes and you go for a poo less often than usual, you might have constipation
Constipation means you find it hard to go for a poo



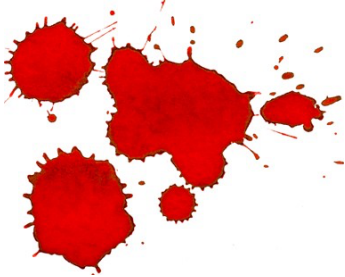
Having constipation can be bad for your health - especially if you have epilepsy or heart disease



Having constipation for a long time can be very serious - you need to get medical advice if you have constipation for more than **2** weeks



If you are still constipated after **2** weeks tell your GP
- they might be able to give you medication or send you
for a check up



If you ever find blood in your poo, tell your GP straight
away - it's probably nothing to worry about but it's good
to get it checked out



Go and see your pharmacist

- if you are going for a poo less often than normal
- or you haven't had a poo for **7** days















You can ask to see them in a private room to tell them
about your symptoms



They will be able to tell you about medication that helps
to get things moving again



They will make sure that this medication is safe to take
with any medication you are already taking

Type 1		hard lumps	
Type 2		lumpy sausage	
Type 3		cracked sausage	
Type 4		smooth soft snake	
Type 5		soft blobs	
Type 6		fluffy pieces	
Type 7		liquid or watery	

Poo comes in different shapes and sizes



If your poo is like Type **1** or **2**, you might have constipation



If your poo is like Type **3**, **4** or **5** it's usually normal and healthy

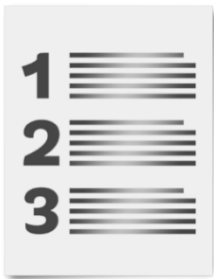


If your poo is like Type **6** or **7**, you probably have diarrhoea

Diarrhoea means you have an upset tummy and your poo is liquid or watery



If you have diarrhoea for more than **2** weeks, talk to your GP



How to tell if you have constipation



You might have constipation

- if you are going for a poo less often than usual



- if you find it hard to go for a poo and strain to go



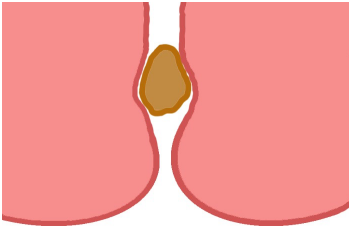
- if you have poo that is dry, hard and lumpy like Type 1 or 2



- if have pain or cramps in your stomach

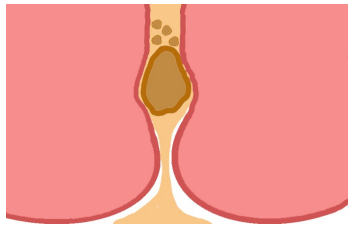


- or you are not feeling hungry and you feel bloated



Overflow Diarrhoea

If you don't have a poo for a long time, a hard lump of poo can get stuck in your bowel - this can be hard to shift



Runny poo from higher up your bowel can't get past the lump of poo – when pressure builds up, it will force its way past the lump of poo and this is called **overflow diarrhoea**



If you suddenly get diarrhoea after having had constipation, see your doctor



Some medications for things like epilepsy or high blood pressure can make you constipated – some painkillers do too



If you are constipated check with your pharmacist to see if your medication could be causing it or making it worse

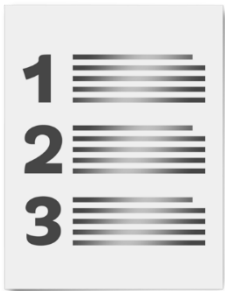


If your pharmacist says your medication could be causing your constipation or making it worse, speak to your GP



Your GP might change your medication or give you a **laxative** – a laxative will help you to poo more easily

Don't just stop taking the medication



How to avoid having constipation



Drink plenty of fluids - water is best, but tea, coffee, soft drinks or milk are all fine

This will help to make your poo soft



Exercise regularly - try to do at least **30** minutes every day



Gentle activity such as housework, walking, dancing or gardening will also help to keep things moving



Make sure you eat plenty of fibre



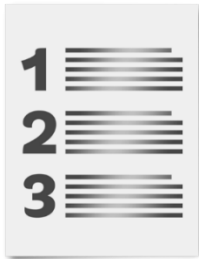
Fruit and vegetables are good ways to get fibre, especially if you eat the skins



Eat wholemeal bread, rice, pasta and cereals whenever you can



Nuts and seeds are also a good way of adding fibre to your diet



If you find it hard to poo, here are some things you can do to help



- try to go for a poo at the same time every day - get into a routine



- try having a hot drink and something to eat about half an hour before you try to do a poo



- it can be easier to have a poo if your feet are raised up - try putting a washing up bowl or something similar under your feet when you sit on the loo



- some disabled toilets have a very high seat - this can make it hard to get in a good position for having a poo