

Tips to relieve **CONSTIPATION**

Constipation is defined as having a bowel movement fewer than three times per week. Often, people who are constipated feel the need to strain during bowel movements and sometimes experience, pain, bloating and the sensation of a full bowel. Supporting healthy bowel function through dietary and lifestyle measures can help ensure that constipation does not have to be a way of life

INCLUDE

- **Daily exercise** –gentle movement such as walking is the best way to encourage regular bowel motions
- **Drink plenty of clean filtered water** throughout the day. Sparkling mineral water or herbal teas will also add to your hydration.
- **Fresh fruit and a range of colourful vegetables** every day. Green leafy vegetables (fresh or steamed) can be very useful to relieve constipation.
- **Whole grains** such as oats, brown rice, buckwheat or quinoa are fantastic sources of fibre and multigrain or rye breads should be substituted for white bread products.
- **Eat breakfast** -starting the day with a meal can help to stimulate your bowels & train them to move in the morning. Allow yourself time to eat before you start your day.
- **Psyllium husks** -add 1 tsp of Psyllium husks and 1 tsp of Vitamin C powder into warm water or juice first thing in the morning.
- **Prunes or other dried fruits** eaten throughout the day may help relieve constipation. They can be mixed with a few handfuls of nuts and seeds as a snack.

AVOID

- tea and coffee as they can be very dehydrating and exacerbate constipation. Drink an extra glass of water for each cup you have.
- Refined carbohydrates, processed or starchy foods
- Irregular eating habits

Useful Hints

- ❖ Respond to any sign that your bowels want to move.
- ❖ Take care with medications as constipation can be a common side effect.

Abdominal massage:

This will encourage your intestines to move in a rhythmic motion as well as encourage any stool bulk to shift downwards through the bowel. Perform it every night for 3-4 minutes before bed or when you are constipated.

- 1.** Lie flat on your back with your knees bent & feet flat on the floor (as if ready to do sit-ups).
- 2.** Breathe deeply & relax.
- 3.** Slowly massage your lower belly in a clockwise motion –working gently around the abdomen, gently circle around with the heel of your palm or your fingers pushing down into your belly at different positions (as if following the numbers on a clock around in a circle).

