

<i>Client:</i>	<i>Date:</i>
<i>Clinician:</i>	

What is Constipation?

- Bowel movements occurring less often than what is the normal pattern
- Hard stool
- Increased difficulty moving bowels

What to Report your Homecare Staff?

- No bowel movement in 2 days or a change in the frequency of bowel movements
- Pain, cramping or tenderness
- A feeling of fullness or bloating
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Blood in stools
- Diarrhea or oozing of stools

What Can be Done?

The good news is that there is much you, your caregiver and your home health care nurse can do for constipation. Your nurse will always try to discover the underlying cause and discuss treatments with your healthcare provider.

- Record when bowel movements have occurred
- Drink as much fluid (liquids) as is comfortable. Drinking warm liquids could be helpful.
- Eat more fruits and fruit juices
- Increase physical activity if possible. Walking short distances can be beneficial
- Sit upright on toilet, commode or bedpan
- Establish routine times for toileting
- Take laxatives/stool softeners as ordered by healthcare provider. Avoid bulk laxatives if not taking in enough fluids
- Notify your home health nurse if constipation continues

Adapted from the Hospice and Palliative Nurse Association's Patient Teaching sheets

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Contact the on-call nurse if you are experiencing any change in your current health condition.
For ALL emergencies requiring IMMEDIATE medical attention, call 911.