



Information Sheet - Constipation

If you have a colostomy you can still become constipated. Constipation occurs when the faeces (output) in the large bowel does not pass regularly, becomes hard and dry.

What can cause constipation with a colostomy?

- Medication
- Diet
- Immobility or reduced daily activity
- Stopping regular laxative medication

Hints and tips

- Drink plenty of fluid daily (8 cups day)
- Try a glass of fresh orange juice (with bits) with your breakfast
- Exercise daily e.g walking
- Eat regularly during the day
- Increase fibre into your diet e.g oats, fruit, vegetables, cereals, whole grains, barley
- Check if constipation is a listed side effects of any medication you are taking
- If you have a tendency to constipation – discuss with your GP an appropriate mild laxative to be taken when required
- If you are taking regular pain relief medication, please discuss with your GP any need for a regular laxative



How to recognise constipation

Everybody's colostomy function is different, and it is not unusual to miss a day or 2.

However, you may be constipated if :

- There has been very little/ no output into the pouch (bag) for over 48 hours
- The output is hard and dry (appears more like small pellets)
- Passing more wind with less output than usual
- You feel bloated and uncomfortable

Things to watch out for

If you have a blockage, your stoma will not work. You would feel sick, have a loss of appetite, with abdominal pain and bloating.

If you had these symptoms we would advise that you should contact your GP.

More support

If you did not find all the information that you need in this factsheet, you can contact Coloplast Charter on **0800 783 1434** for advice and support. Alternatively, you can visit www.coloplastcharter.co.uk or discuss your questions and concerns with your healthcare professional.