



Constipation in Children: What to Do?

High Fiber Smoothie

- 1 cup frozen mixed berries
 - ¼ cup oatmeal
 - 1 teaspoon ground flax seeds
 - ½ cup prune juice
 - ½ cup milk or almond milk
1. Add all ingredients to a blender or smoothie maker and mix until smooth.
 2. Serve chilled!

Prune Paste

- 1 cup pitted prunes
 - ½ cup pitted dates
 - ½ cup dried raisins
 - ½ cup water
 - ½ cup orange juice
1. Combine dried fruit, water and juice and soak for 1-2 hours in the refrigerator.
 2. In a food processor or blender, blend all ingredients until smooth.
 3. Spread over whole grain toast or mix into oatmeal.

Constipation can be a really icky feeling for children, just like it is for adults. Bloating, cramping, straining. These are all feelings of constipation, but how do parents identify if their children are constipated? Getting a good look at your child's bowel movement is a smart way to figure out if they are having issues with constipation. A regular, healthy bowel movement is smooth and long. There is a good chance your child is constipated if their stool is in small, hard pellets or long, but extra hard and lumpy.

Signs of constipation:

1. Pain, discomfort, or straining while pooping
2. Fewer than normal trips to poop
3. Feeling bloated and full

Common Causes of Constipation

- *Resisting the urge to go.* This could be because they are embarrassed or uncomfortable going to the bathroom outside of the home or simply because they do not want to stop playing to go to take a trip to the toilet.
- *Medications.* Some medications and supplements can result in constipation. Check with your doctor if you think a medication is causing constipation.
- *Diet.* Not eating enough foods high in fiber, like fruits and vegetables, not drinking enough water, and drinking too many sugary drinks can also result in constipation.

3 Ways to Prevent and Alleviate Constipation

1. **Add in some fiber foods**
Fiber adds mass to stool making it easier to pass out of the body. Fiber can be found in whole grains, beans and legumes, fruits and vegetables.
2. **Drink more water**
Staying hydrated is key to having regular bowel movements, particularly if more fiber is added to the diet.
3. **Exercise**
Exercise stimulates the bowels and helps maintain health, regular bowel movements. If your child's body is moving their bowels are moving as well!

