
Pain Management for Bowels

Pain medications can slow bowels down and cause constipation. Here are a few things you can do to keep your bowel movements regular:

- Eat foods that contain good bacteria or probiotics.
- Eat prunes and products made from prunes. These foods can help soften your bowels.
- Eat foods that contain fiber. NOTE: Add fiber slowly into your diet if you do not already eat a diet high in fiber-rich foods. Include water (at least 6 glasses each day) otherwise you could develop gas, bloating, diarrhea, or constipation.

Probiotic foods

Foods that provide “good bacteria” or probiotics will help your digestive system work its best. These foods have typically been fermented or cultured. Some examples include:

- Yogurt with live cultures. Look for yogurt with:
 - **Bifidobacteria.** These strains of bacteria are abbreviated with a “B” on the nutrition label’s list of ingredients.
 - **Lactobacillus.** These strains of bacteria are abbreviated with an “L” on the nutrition label’s list of ingredients.
- Kefir (a yogurt beverage, found in the dairy section of the grocery store)
- Sauerkraut or kimchi (fermented cabbage)
- Miso or tempeh (fermented soy products)

Prunes

Prunes and prune products can soften bowels. Start by adding a small amount at each meal. For example, add 2 prunes with breakfast, a small glass of prune juice with lunch, and 2 prunes with your evening meal.

High Fiber Foods

Eat 2-4 cups of fruit each day

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- Choose fresh or frozen fruit instead of juice, canned, or peeled fruit.
 - Have fruit as a snack between meals, such as a banana, pear, or apple.
 - Add fruit to cereals, salads, yogurt, or cottage cheese.

Eat 3 or more cups of vegetables each day.

- Choose fresh vegetables instead of canned.
- Use frozen vegetables (without sauce).
- Add lettuce, tomatoes and other vegetables to sandwiches.
- Use vegetables in a stir-fry or cut up fresh vegetables and enjoy with a low-fat dip.

Eat at least 3 ounces of whole grain each day.

- Choose whole grain cereals with 5 grams or more of fiber per serving.
- Choose whole grain breads with 3 grams or more of fiber per serving.
- The first ingredient in breads and cereals should be “whole grain” or “whole wheat.”
- Choose brown rice, wild rice, barley, or quinoa instead of white rice.
- Add oat or wheat bran when baking muffins, cookies, pancakes, waffles, or meatloaf.
- Add wheat germ to yogurt or hot cereal.

Eat at least ½ cup of dried beans, peas, potatoes with skin, or corn a few times a week.

- Dried beans can be a replacement in recipes for animal protein.
- Use cooked dry beans, peas, or corn in soups, stews, side dishes, dips, casseroles, salads, and pastas.
- Add dried beans, peas, or corn to tacos, burritos, or rice.
- Use cooked and cooled unpeeled potatoes or whole grain pasta to make salads.

Mix high fiber foods into your daily food choices.

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- Add nuts or seeds to breakfast cereal, yogurt, salads, and desserts.
 - Add a small handful of nuts or dried fruit to trail-mix for snack.
 - Try a new flavor on your dinner plate: add avocado to salsa to make guacamole dip; grill or bake squash.
 - Edamame (green soy beans) can be steamed, boiled, or eaten as a fiber rich appetizer.

Foods with added fiber are also available at grocery stores such as cereal, granola bars, pasta, yogurt, and high fiber soups