

CONSTIPATION DURING PREGNANCY

Constipation is a common discomfort in pregnancy. Constipation may be caused by hormonal changes, pressure from the baby on the bowel, certain medications, or diet are examples that can make the bowel move slower.

NUTRITION BASICS

- Drink plenty of water throughout the day, not just when you're thirsty
- Drink 8 to 12 cups, or about 4-6 standard size water bottles daily
- Consume 25-30 grams fiber per day
- Try ground flax seed, 1 Tbsp twice a day on oatmeal or salads



FIBER RICH FOODS

Raspberries 1/2 cup = 4g	Popcorn 3 cups = 3.5g	Whole Grain Bread 1 slice = 1.9g	High Fiber Cereal >5g per serving
Edamame (Soy beans) 1 cup (boiled) = 8.1g	Flax Seeds 1 Tbsp = 2.8g	Quinoa 1 cup = 5g	Chia seeds 1 oz = 10.6g
Strawberries 1 cup = 3g	Pear, with skin 5.5g	Apple, with skin 4.4g	Orange 3.1g
Prunes (contains sorbitol, a natural laxative)	Almonds 1 oz = 3.5g	Sunflower seed kernels 1/4 cup = 3.9g	Baked potato Sweet potato, with skin 1 small = 3.0g
Figs 2 medium, dried = 1.6g	Banana 3.1g	Oatmeal, instant 1 cup = 4g	Brown rice 1 cup = 3.5g
Lentils, cooked 1 cup = 15.6g	Black beans, cooked 1 cup = 15g	Navy beans, cooked 1 cup = 19g	Artichoke, cooked 1 med = 10.3g
Broccoli 1 cup = 5.1g	Sweet corn 1 cup = 4.0g	Green peas 1 cup = 8.8g	Garbanzo beans/ Chickpeas cooked 1 cup = 13g

CONSTIPATION PREVENTION

- Exercise may help to alleviate constipation. Talk to your provider about safe exercises you can do indoors (ie prenatal yoga). **If you feel safe, take a walk in your neighborhood!**
- Go to the bathroom as soon as you feel the urge like you need to, and **do not wait**
- Allow yourself enough time to empty your bowels; **try not to strain (straining may cause hemorrhoids)**

YOUR PROVIDER MAY RECOMMEND THE FOLLOWING OVER-THE-COUNTER (OTC) TREATMENT OPTIONS

- Fiber supplements (such as Metamucil)
- Stool softeners, such as Colace or Miralax are generally safe during pregnancy

THINGS TO AVOID

- Avoid stimulant laxatives like Ex-lax, Correctol and Dulcolax, unless prescribed by your provider. **Stimulants may cause diarrhea and dehydration.**
- Avoid use of enemas, unless prescribed by your provider

CALL YOUR DOCTOR IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Bleeding or rectal pain when you have a bowel movement
- No bowel movement in more than four days
- You have severe abdominal pain with bowel movements

LEARN MORE:

U.S. Department of Agriculture. Food Sources of Fiber: bit.ly/4gDz8Rx

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Problems of the Digestive System: bit.ly/4iVpuet

