

Healthy Bowel Function

Normal bowel emptying can range from three times a day to three times a week. Soft and regular bowel motions are important to prevent constipation, straining, and haemorrhoids. Constipation can also make you feel like emptying the bladder often.



"Seated squat" position on the toilet

HELPFUL TIPS

- Drinking enough fluid
- Having regular gentle activity and exercise
- Going to the toilet when you feel the need to empty your bowel. Try not to delay
- Making time to empty the bowel. Be relaxed
- Talking to a Dietitian to check you are eating the right type and amount of fibre, especially if you have medical conditions. Fibre is in the flesh, skin and seeds of fruits (e.g. pears, apples, kiwi fruit and prunes), vegetables, and whole grains (see Normal Bowel Function info sheet)
- Sometimes laxatives can assist in bowel sensation and stool consistency. Discuss with your therapist.

A "seated squat" improves bowel emptying:

- Relax your tummy and pelvic floor muscles
- **Do not strain** - straining may weaken and damage your pelvic floor muscles. If you are tempted to strain, leave the toilet
- Elevate your feet on a small stool (if safe) so the knees are above the level of the hips
- Lean forward and rest your elbows on your knees

Inspired by *You*



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