

IF I NEED MEDICATION TO RELIEVE CONSTIPATION, WHICH ONES ARE HELPFUL?

Psyllium, also known as Metamucil®, is laxative that works by increasing the bulk of the stool. It promotes bowel movements, however diarrhea can be caused by excessive use of the laxative.

Docusate or Colace®, which can be taken twice daily, acts as a stool softener and causes regular bowel movements. Some other treatments include lactulose syrup such as Acilac® or Duphalac® or glycerin suppositories.

If you experience extended constipation, you may need to use enemas such as Fleet® enema. These are fast acting and usually induce multiple bowel movements. It is recommended that you use these in the mornings, so the bowel movements don't interfere with your sleep.

If required, you can apply the different methods at the same time. However, when buying prescription free laxatives or stool softeners, consult your pharmacist about which one would be the best for you. If these practices do not relieve your constipation, seek advice from your physician. Also if you have other medical conditions consult your physician before using this information.

In refractory cases of constipation in Parkinson's disease, botulinum toxin injections into anal sphincter is possible. However, this should be done by physicians who have special expertise and your neurologist may guide you further in this regard.



DID YOU KNOW?

The number of Parkinson's patients will double by 2031. Millions of Parkinson's patients around the world are suffering from poverty and...

- Cannot afford to buy their medications
- Cannot afford to purchase a cane, walker, or a wheelchair
- Cannot obtain educational literature about Parkinson's in their language
- Are not able to afford consulting a neurologist and remain undiagnosed and untreated

OUR UNIQUE SERVICES

World Parkinson's Program is the only organization which provides the following unique services to Parkinson's patients around the world:

- Parkinson's medications to those patients who can't afford to buy them
- Canes, walkers & wheelchairs to prevent falls
- Parkinson's educational brochures in many languages
- Free electronic educational newsletter
- Chapters of World Parkinson's Program in various parts of the world

JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST PARKINSON'S

TO DONATE, VISIT PDPROGRAM.ORG

This information is not a substitute of medical advice. Consult your Physician before applying this information.

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Frequently asked questions about **PARKINSON'S DISEASE & CONSTIPATION**



ENGLISH - 13



www.pdprogram.org

"Those who fight Parkinson's with knowledge always find solutions"- Dr. Rana

Parkinson's disease is a progressive neurodegenerative condition characterized by tremors, slowness of movements, stiffness, and balance problems. In addition, Parkinson's has many non-motor symptoms such as memory or cognitive issues, speech and swallowing problems, depression, and sleep difficulties. It affects almost 10 million individuals around the world.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CAUSES OF CONSTIPATION?

Parkinson's may not be the only reason of your constipation; there are many other causes of constipation which may need to be investigated by your physician. Besides Parkinson's, following are some of the other causes of constipation:

- Lack of exercise
- Lack of fiber in diet
- Some medications
- Hypothyroidism
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Cancer
- Kidney failure

HOW IS CONSTIPATION RELATED TO PARKINSON'S?

Constipation is common among people who suffer from Parkinson's and research has shown that in many cases, constipation may precede the appearance of other motor symptoms of Parkinson's. In one research study, men who reported less frequent bowel movements had a significantly higher risk of Parkinson's disease than men who reported more frequent bowel movements over a certain period of time.

One of the cause of constipation in Parkinson's is that it causes the bowel movement to slow down. However, bowel action varies from person to person. Therefore, a certain frequency of bowel movements may be normal for one person but may be considered as constipation for another person.

WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF CONSTIPATION?

Constipation can lead to many serious problem in patients with Parkinson's such as:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Poor and unpredictable absorption of drugs
- Bloating
- Abdominal pain
- Megacolon
- Intestinal perforation

Nausea is a known side effect of Parkinson's medication, and constipation can further complicate this. Poor and unpredictable absorption of Parkinson's medications due to constipation can lead to worsening of motor complications in Parkinson's patients.

Constipation may also have an emotional effect on Parkinson's patients. Many times patients feel comfortable if they have bowel movements at the start of their day. They find themselves relieved and develop a feeling of a "good day". Whereas, patients that don't have bowel movements at the start of the day, may have a feeling of a "bad day". Not having their usual bowel movement may lead to anxiety and stress, which contributes to the worsening of the Parkinson's symptoms.

HOW CAN I MANAGE CONSTIPATION?

Exercise

Exercise can be as simple as fifteen minutes daily walk and may be very helpful in managing constipation. Set goals for yourself such as walking several times a day.

Healthy diet

Some important points regarding diet are:

- Eating meals at regular times
- Not skipping any meals
- Having regular bowel habits by attempting to have a bowel movement at roughly the same time every day. It is suggested that this time should be about thirty minutes after a meal
- Including fiber in your diet which can be found in whole wheat bread, oatmeal, and bran cereals. Fruits, rice and pasta are also good sources of fiber as well as vegetables and barley

Fluids

- Increased fluid intake. It is recommended that you drink around 4 -8 glasses of water each day. Other fluids such as senna tea and prune juice are also very helpful.
- Hot beverages can have a laxative effect, but they are most effective when taken in the morning.