

WHAT YOU NEED  
TO KNOW

## UNDERSTANDING CONSTIPATION IN SENIORS

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Pharmacy

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## WHAT IS CONSTIPATION?

Constipation is a condition in which you have fewer than three bowel movements in a week, and your stools are hard and dry, making them painful and difficult to pass. Constipation is a symptom, not a disease.

### HOW OFTEN IS NORMAL?

One to three bowel movements per day or at least one bowel movement every other day. So if you poop only three times per week, you probably are NOT constipated.

### WHAT CAUSES CONSTIPATION?

Some common causes of constipation include:

- *not drinking enough fluids or eating enough fibre*
- *lack of exercise or physical immobility*
- *ignoring the urge to have a bowel movement*
- *a change in routine, such as travelling*
- *older age*
- *certain medical conditions*
- *certain medications*

### HOW IS CONSTIPATION TREATED?

Always try non-drug options first. These include things like increasing the fibre and fluid in your diet, along with physical activity. Drug treatments include different laxatives and stimulants.

*Speak to your family doctor, pharmacist or nurse if you think that you are experiencing constipation.*

#### REFERENCES:

[www.bodyandhealth.canada.com](http://www.bodyandhealth.canada.com)

Rao, S. S. (2018, May 21). Constipation in the Older Adult (N. J. Talley, Ed.).