

# Constipation in Adults

This is a common problem in western society. Although sporting activity and a healthy diet have a positive effect on the **digestion**, constipation may be the result of a variety of other causes.

**T**here are two types of constipation: **obstructed** defecation, also known as rectal outlet obstruction, and **hypomotility** which is also known as **colonic** slow transit. Some of the symptoms are **bloating** and a feeling of not being able to completely **evacuate** the **bowels**. Other symptoms include nausea and a loss of appetite.

**Pharmacy customer:** Good morning. Do you speak English?  
PTA: Yes, I do. How may I help you?

**I am having problems going to the toilet. You know, lack of bowel movements.**

Oh, that's uncomfortable. How long have you had the problem? I mean, how long have you been unable to go?

**For about a week or so.**  
Is this unusual for you?

**Definitely! I normally have quite good digestion but this last week has been terrible. It's so bad that I am almost afraid to eat! And this bloated feeling is uncomfortable.**

That is understandable. Do you have any problems with **irritable bowel syndrome**?

**No, not really.**  
Have you been taking any calcium or iron **supplements**? They have also been known to cause constipation.

**I don't usually take supplements of any kind.**

I see. What about changes in diet? Some people have problems when they go on holiday because of a change in daily routines and the unusual food.

**No, we haven't been on holiday since July, and I had no problems then.**

I assume that you are getting enough fibre and are drinking enough fluids, otherwise you wouldn't be here. Am I right?

**Certainly! I always try to get my fibre in the form of fruit and vegetables and whole-wheat products. And I drink about two litres of fluids a day.**

What about sport? Do you get enough exercise?

**Certainly! I take the dog out for a walk at least twice a day. And I go jogging a few times a week.**

Very good! I can recommend these **suppositories**. They contain bisacodyl, which is a very effective laxative.

**When should I use it?**

As it is fast-acting I recommend that put it in when you are at home, where you have peace and quite.

**Should I put it in before or after eating?**

It may be used at any time. I, personally recommend putting it in place between meals. It generally acts very quickly, normally in 15 to 20 minutes, but it may take up to an hour.

**Is there anything else that I can do?**

To get you back to normal, I recommend this **bulking-forming preparation**. It helps to **retain** fluid in the stools and makes them softer. And, please, make sure to still drink plenty of fluids! If the problem still **persists** after using the medication, make sure to go to your doctor. And try not to worry, that doesn't help either!

**Thank you, I'll make sure of that. Bye!**

Goodbye! ■

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## VOCABULARY

constipation	Obstipation, Verstopfung
digestion	Verdauung
obstructed	blockierte Darm-/ Stuhlentleerung
hypomotility	Hypomotilität
colonic	Dickdarm-
bloating	Völlegefühl, Aufgebläht
evacuate	entleeren
Bowels	Eingeweide
irritable bowel syndrome	Reizdarm, Colon irritabile
iron	Eisen
supplements	Ergänzungsmittel
whole-wheat	Vollkorn
suppositories	Zäpfchen
bulk-forming preparation	Quellstoffpräparat
retain	behalten
persist	andauern