



Can I Give My Baby ...?

Answers For New Parents

Infant Constipation Fact Sheet

Deciding whether or not your child is constipated can be tricky. Being constipated depends on the consistency of your bowel movements, not the frequency. Soft bowel movements, whether every day or every few days, are considered healthy. If your baby's bowel movements are hard nuggets or small, hard pebbles, this is constipation.

Recognizing Constipation

Signs may include a quick drawing up of the legs, a red face and grunting as your baby attempts to pass a bowel movement, straining and obvious discomfort. The best indicator is hard, pebbled stools.

Natural Remedies To Beat Constipation

Feeding

If you're a breastfeeding Mom try to increase your own water intake. You may be dehydrated and so your breast milk is not as fluid as it could be. Do not give your baby water if they are younger than 6 months.

Break up feeding time. Smaller feeds more often may help ease the load on a baby's sensitive digestive tract.

Talk to your doctor about changing your brand of formula.

If your baby is on solids and eating a variety of foods try to cut back on constipation causing foods like rice, bananas and cooked carrots. Try natural stool softening foods like prunes, apricots or pears. Be sure to puree these foods as they can be a choking hazard.

Anal Stimulation

Apply a small dab of lubricating gel to your baby's anus to allow the stool to pass more easily. Avoid using a mineral oil.

Take your baby's temperature using a rectal thermometer. The baby pushes against the thermometer and it can get things moving.

Massage your baby

Massage can make a baby feel less tense meaning the stool may pass more easily. You can also try massaging your baby's stomach in a circular motion near the navel to promote bowel movement.

Measure three finger-widths below your baby's navel and apply gentle but firm pressure with your fingertips. Press until you feel a firmness or mass. Maintain gentle but constant pressure for about three minutes.

Exercise

Place your baby on their back and gently grasp their feet. Move your baby's legs up and down as though they were riding a bicycle. Do this slowly and gently for a few minutes throughout the day. The exercise can stimulate a bowel movement. If your infant is a little older get them in their walker and let them do a few laps.

Warm Bath

A warm bath can help relax the baby and prompt a bowel movement. You can also place a warm face cloth on the baby's stomach. Take care it is not hot, only warm.

Suppositories

Speak to your baby's health care provider about the use of glycerine suppositories. These suppositories are inserted into your baby's anus where they help lubricate the hard stool and will make the passage easier. If your doctor has recommended a suppository, it's fine to use occasionally. If you use suppositories on a regular basis your infant may wind up relying on them to have a bowel movement.

Never give your baby a laxative without your paediatrician's approval.

Other concerns regarding infant constipation

Help! My Baby Is Leaking Blood

This can be a terrifying experience and you should always seek medical advice. If your baby has been constipated, it's likely that the delicate skin at the opening of their anus has torn. Known as anal fissures, they can bleed a little when your infant passes a stool. A little aloe vera lotion can help them to heal.

My Baby Was Constipated, but now has diarrhoea

Noticing liquid stools in your baby's diaper isn't always a relief from constipation. If your baby has a compacted stool in the lower intestine liquid stools (diarrhoea) can slip past into your child's diaper. Always talk to your doctor.

Remember, constipation refers to the consistency of the bowel movement, not the frequency. As long as your child is having soft bowel movements, it does not matter how often they occur. If your child's bowel movements are repeatedly hard or pebble-like, you should consult your child's doctor for a constipation remedy.



Like us on Facebook

