



DIETARY INSTRUCTIONS FOR BOWEL PROBLEMS

DIET

1. Avoid carbonated beverages (Coke, Pepsi, carbonated orange drinks, tonic water, soda water, sparkling water, etc.)
2. No chewing gum.
3. Drink a minimum of six (6) glasses of water a day.
4. Include a minimum of four (4) fruits and vegetables in your diet each day.
5. Try to eat complex starches instead of highly refined starches (for example, have rye crackers instead of potato chips, whole wheat bread instead of white bread, bran or oat muffins instead of donuts.)

BOWEL HABITS

1. Try to establish a daily time for your bowel movements. Most people feel an urge to defecate after meals because of a reflex called the gastro-colic abdominal reflex. Many people ignore this urge if they are at school or work which can lead to pain or cramping. To establish a morning bowel pattern, get up early enough to defecate prior to work or school. Eat your breakfast when you first get up so the urge occurs before leaving for school or work.
2. Begin a stool medication, such as Metamucil, wheat bran or FiberCon. Be aware that when you first start the medicine, your pain may be temporarily worsened while your bowel is adjusting.
3. After you have been on this diet and bowel habit program for six weeks, you can stop the stool medication. If your stools are firmer than toothpaste when off the medication, you should restart it again.