



Constipation Prevention and Management

After surgery many people can have a difficult time with constipation. This is a very common issue that most people have. It is caused from anesthesia, a change in eating and drinking habits, and especially from narcotic pain medication. Please **DO NOT STOP ALL PAIN MEDICATIONS** as it does still take a few days after you are off narcotics to return to normal function and your pain can get out of control. Also be aware that other medications such as nausea meds, antidepressants, antihistamines, blood pressure meds, Bismuth, iron and calcium can contribute to constipation.

Preventing or alleviating constipation usually requires that the patient do the following:

- Increase fluid intake
- Establish and maintain a regular elimination schedule
- Provide a quiet and adequate time for elimination
- Maintain a diet rich in fiber

Recommended treatment starting on the day you get home:

1. **Day 1:** Mira lax 17g: 1 cap full twice a day
Colace 100mg: 2 tablets 2 times per day
Drink plenty of water
(If no bowel movement by day 2)
2. **Day 2 Add:** Smooth Move Tea OTC: One cup of tea taken before bedtime will generally produce a bowel movement within 6-12 hours
Drink plenty of water
(If no bowel movement by day 3)
3. **Day 3:** Magnesium Citrate OTC: 150-300 ml. orally once a day
-or-
Dulcolax suppository 10mg Rx: 1 rectally daily
Drink plenty of water

As long as you are on Narcotic pain medication a regular bowel movement may be difficult. Once you have had a bowel movement taper back to the DAILY medication instruction above. If at any point you have loose stools stop the above treatment protocol.

If no bowel movement after 4 days on this protocol or if you have abdominal pain, nausea or vomiting contact Dr. Askew's office.