

Chronic Constipation: Causes, Symptoms & Treatment



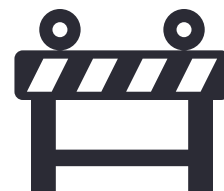
Slow Transit Constipation



- **What is it?** A slow colon leads to infrequent bowel movements.
- **Symptoms:** A lack of urge to have a bowel movement for many days, often resulting in fewer than two bowel movements a week.
- **Treatment:** Increase fiber intake, fiber supplements like psyllium, gentle laxatives such as polyethylene glycol (Miralax), plenty of water. Sometimes prescription medications are needed.

Pelvic Floor Dysfunction

- **What is it?** The muscles of the pelvic floor do not work together correctly, making it difficult to effectively pass stool (almost like a blockage).
- **Symptoms:** Difficulty starting a bowel movement, feeling incomplete evacuation, and sometimes needing manual assistance.
- **Treatment:** A Squatty Potty can help, but many people benefit most from Pelvic Floor Physical Therapy.



Irritable Bowel Syndrome with Constipation (IBS-C)



- **What is it?** A type of IBS where constipation is accompanied by abdominal pain and/or bloating. Compared to other types of constipation, IBS-C is more of a sensory disorder, rather than a speed or blockage issue.
- **Symptoms:** Pain or bloating related to constipation and bowel movements.
- **Treatment:** Yoga, meditation, dietary changes like the FODMAP diet or increasing fiber and fermented foods, and sometimes medication.

Many people have more than one cause of chronic constipation. Your clinician will work with you on an individually tailored treatment plan to help you feel better.