

# Dealing With Constipation in Infants and Children

## What Can Cause Constipation in Children

Common causes of constipation in children include...

- Not enough fluids
- Low fiber
- Changes in diet
- Early toilet training



## What to Do for Constipation

- Drink plenty of water
- Slowly add fiber to your child's meals
- Physical activity (playing) may also help relieve constipation
- See your Doctor if constipation (no bowel movements) lasts for longer than 3-4 days



### Tips for Adding Fiber to Your Child's Eating Plan

Kids need 19-25 grams of fiber per day

- Give them whole grain breads and cereals. Look for choices with 100% whole wheat, rye, oats, or bran as the first or second ingredient
- Serve beans more often (ex. Baked beans, refried beans, add beans to spaghetti sauce or Sloppy Joes)
- Choose fresh fruit and vegetables instead of juices.

### Fiber Table

Food	Amount	Grams of Fiber
Cooked Spinach	½ cup	3
Broccoli	½ cup	2.5
Raspberries	½ cup	4
Pinto Beans	½ cup	8
Whole-Wheat Bread	1 slice	3
Multi-Grain Cheerios®	½ cup	1.5
Instant Oatmeal	1 package	3



## Constipation Myths

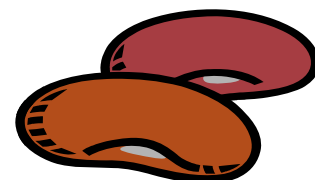
### Myth 1) Dairy causes constipation in children.

Dairy is not the common cause of constipation in children! Dehydration (not drinking enough water) is the usual culprit.

### Myth 2) Juice will relieve constipation in children.

Juice is not the recommended practice for relieving constipation in children. Bacteria in the intestines eat sugar from the juice. This can cause gas, bloating, and diarrhea. One small serving each day is healthy. Serve up to:

- 4 oz/day for 8-11 month olds
- ¾ cup/day for 1-2 years old
- 1 cup/day for 3-5 years old
- 1 ¼ cups/day for 6-12 years old



\*Adapted from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Dietetic Association, and the Mayo Clinic

*Day Care Resources, Inc.* 2011.