

Understanding Constipation

Constipation affects around 20% of Americans.

Symptoms can include less than 3 bowel movements per week, straining with bowel movements, hard or thin stools, incomplete evacuation, liquid stool and abdominal pain after meals.

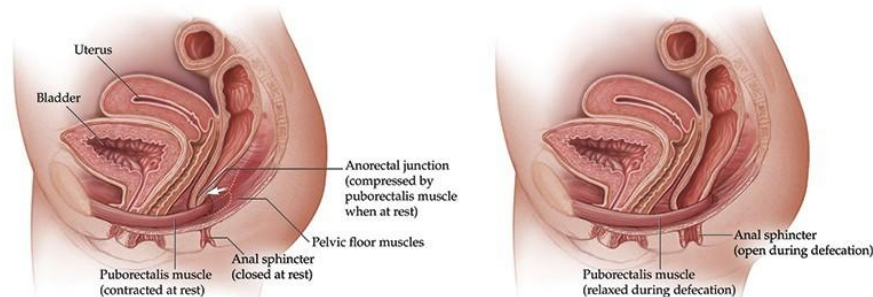
It is a symptom, not a disease and can be caused by many factors: poor diet, dehydration, lack of exercise, IBS, pregnancy, laxative abuse, and old age.

Constipation is often divided into three types:

- **Normal-transit** constipation is the most common constipation. It is described as hard, dry stools as a result of stool sluggishly moving through the colon, allowing too much water absorption. The most common treatments are increased water and fiber as well as conservative use of laxatives.
- **Slow -transit** constipation is reduced motility of the large intestine, caused usually by abnormalities of the enteric nerves. Treatment options may include medication to improve bowel motility, regular enemas to flush the rectum, **electrical stimulation**, or occasionally, surgery. Left untreated, it often leads to constipation and fecal incontinence.
- **Functional** constipation affects as much as 50% of people with chronic constipation. It is an impaired relaxation and coordination of pelvic floor and abdominal muscles during evacuation called Non-relaxing Puborectalis syndrome. Pelvic floor exercises and electrical stimulation are designed to re-train the muscles to relax.

Strategy of Treatment

Dietary Changes Increased Fiber PFT Exercises & Electrical Stimulation



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