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<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Dietitian:</b>
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## Constipation

Constipation is a common complaint of people with chronic kidney disease. Constipation can make you feel generally unwell, can affect your ability to dialyse and increase your potassium levels.

There are 3 important factors that help to improve constipation.

1. Eating enough fibre
2. Meeting your fluid intake targets
3. Including some light physical activity

### Fibre

Eating enough fibre is important to keeping your bowels regular. Fibre is found in fruits, vegetables, breads and cereals

### Fruit

- Include 2 serves of fruit each day. 1 serve = ½ cup chopped fruit
- Choose fresh fruits more often as these contain more fibre than canned fruits
- Choose fruits which are lower in potassium, such as apples, pears, mandarins, oranges, strawberries, blueberries, canned prunes

### Vegetables

- Include 4-5 serves of vegetables or salad each day. 1 serve = ½ cup
- You can include fresh or frozen vegetables
- Include salad vegetables on sandwiches or wraps
- Include vegetables or salad with your main meal

## Breads and cereals

- Look at food labels to know how much fibre is in your breads and cereals.
- Choose products which contain 7g fibre or more per 100g. The more fibre the better!

### White bread

	Average Quantity per 100 g
Energy	1020 kJ
Protein	8.4 g
Fat, total	2.0 g
- saturated	0.6 g
Carbohydrate	46.3 g
- sugars	2.4 g
<b>Dietary Fibre</b>	<b>2.7 g</b>
Sodium	400 mg

← This food is low in fibre. You can make a better choice.

### Wholemeal bread with added fibre

	Average Quantity per 100 g
Energy	977 kJ
Protein	9.7 g
Fat, total	3.1 g
- saturated	0.5 g
Carbohydrate	37.0 g
- sugars	3.1 g
<b>Dietary Fibre</b>	<b>8.5 g</b>
Sodium	390 mg

← This food is high in fibre. This is a good choice.

## Fibre supplements

There are some over-the-counter fibre supplements that you can buy. Fibre supplements should be introduced slowly into your diet to avoid any side-effects (e.g. excess wind, bloating, abdominal pain)

### 1. Benefibre

This has no flavour and can be mixed into anything that has some liquid (e.g. water, tea, coffee, milk, yoghurt, soups, stews)

**\*\*This supplement is suitable for people on a fluid restriction\*\***



### 2. Metamucil

This is a powder that is made into a drink.

**\*\*You need to drink plenty of fluid with Metamucil. You should avoid this if you are on a fluid restriction\*\***



For individualised advice on how you can improve your fibre intake talk with a dietitian.

## **Fluid**

You should aim to reach your fluid target each day. However, be careful not to go over the fluid restriction that has been set by your doctor.

If you are not sure how much fluid you should be drinking each day, talk with your doctor or dietitian.

You get fluid from:

- Drinks (water, tea, coffee, cordials, soft drinks, milk etc)
- Some foods (e.g. fruits, yoghurt, custards, ice cream, jelly, soups, sauces)

## **Physical activity**

Including regular exercise can help keep your bowels regular. Aim to include 30 minutes of physical activity each day. You can break this up into smaller time slots.

Physical activity could include:

- going for a walk around your neighbourhood
- taking an extra set of stairs
- parking the car further away
- playing golf or lawn bowls
- using an exercise bike
- aqua aerobics or hydrotherapy

If you don't usually exercise it may be good to see a physiotherapist or exercise physiologist who can start you on an exercise program. Ask your GP for a referral.

## **Medications**

Some people may also need medications known as laxatives to help improve their bowels. Common laxatives used in chronic kidney disease include:

- Movicol
- Coloxyl with senna

However it is best to talk to your doctor about which laxatives may be best for you.