

Let's get poo in the loo

Child Health Services Patient Information Leaflet



So what is constipation?

Good question!

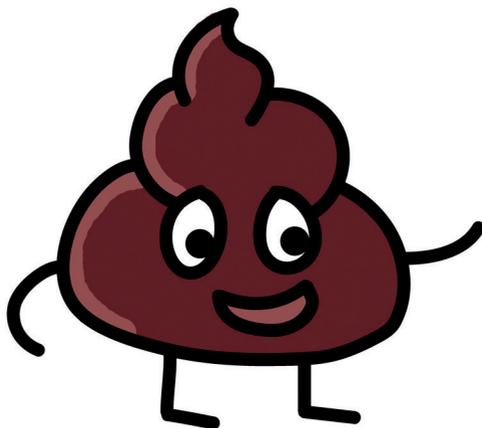
Poo is the rubbish your body gets rid of but it can cause a whole load of problems if we are struggling to get rid of it.

Constipation simply means you are not passing your poo properly. You may be struggling to get your poo out of your bottom or may not know when you need a poo. We see lots of children just like you. It is very common and if not treated or treated too gently can lead to soiling (poo in pants).

You are under our team as you are struggling to poo and we aim to give you an understanding of how and why is this happening to you and to guide you through the process.



We can't sort this problem overnight. But we are determined to support, help and guide you to get the best possible advice to help get poo in the loo! But you also have to be prepared to do all the things the nurse asks, such as keeping your bowel diary and drinking plenty of water or squash throughout the day. We need to work as a team. Most children with a poo problem think they are the only one, but we see lots of children with poo problems.



It can be embarrassing talking about poo but we hope you can talk to the school nurse, your parents or carers.

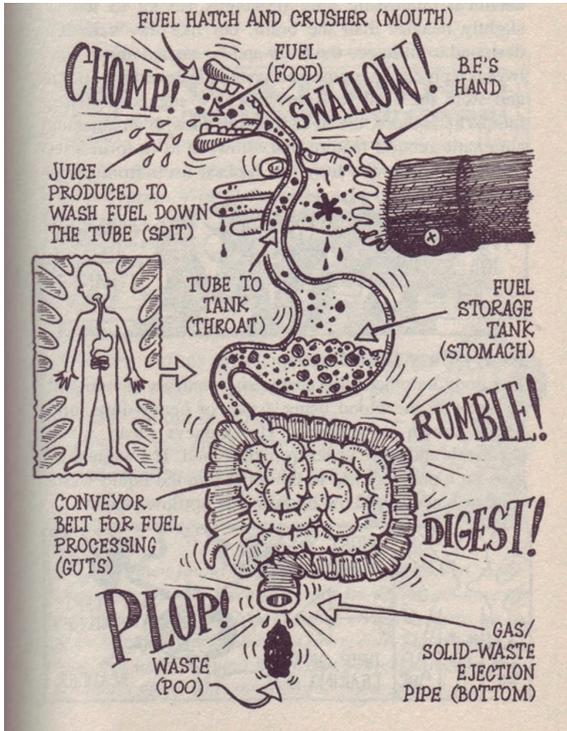
Remember sharing a problem can really help!

There are lots of different words for poo, so if you hear the words stool, bowel movement or faeces they simply mean poo!

So where does poo come from?

Your bottom of course! But how does it get there? Any ideas?

The food we eat is chewed and goes down a tube into the stomach where it gets mashed up, turning it into a soupy mixture. It then heads down a long tube called the bowel.



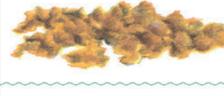
There are two parts to the bowel; first the small bowel takes all the good stuff out (nutrients) to keep your body fit and healthy. The liquid poo then travels into the large bowel. On it's journey it becomes firmer as the water is absorbed along it's travels.

This should give you a smooth sausage poo that is easy to come out of your bottom. The chart overleaf shows us all the different types of poos and the poo we aim to have is a type 4. This should not hurt your bottom and should not take lots of struggling or straining to get rid of.

What can go wrong?

If you notice you struggle and strain to get poo in the loo then you could be constipated. Having a poo less than 3 times a week could be a sign that you are constipated. You need to be a poo detective and keep a chart of how often you are pooing and what it looks like. Other signs are soiling (poo in pants), hard rabbit dropping poos (have been in the poo pipe too long and have become hard and dry) and having really big poos that hurt your bottom coming out and may even cause a tear inside the bottom as it's overstretched, which then really hurts! Ouch!

There may even be a bit of fresh red blood when you wipe your bottom.

THE BRISTOL STOOL FORM SCALE (for children)		
choose your		P O O !
type 1		looks like: rabbit droppings <small>Separate hard lumps, like nuts (hard to pass)</small>
type 2		looks like: bunch of grapes <small>Sausage-shaped but lumpy</small>
type 3		looks like: corn on cob <small>Like a sausage but with cracks on its surface</small>
type 4		looks like: sausage <small>Like a sausage or snake, smooth and soft</small>
type 5		looks like: chicken nuggets <small>Soft blobs with clear-cut edges (passed easily)</small>
type 6		looks like: porridge <small>Fluffy pieces with ragged edges, a mushy stool</small>
type 7		looks like: gravy <small>Watery, no solid pieces ENTIRELY LIQUID</small>

This can cause all types of trouble as then children can develop a habit of keeping poo inside their bottoms as pooing is painful.

Concept by Professor DCA Candy and Emma Davey based on the Bristol stool form scale produced by Dr. K W Heaton Reader in medicine at the University of Bristol. ©2005, Norgine Pharmaceuticals Limited, manufacturer of Movicol Paediatric plain ©

What can be done to get poo in the loo?

You may be wondering what type of things you can do to help. Simple, lots of things! You are the one who can do these things. Parents, despite nagging you, can't do these things for you. Think to yourself: "I am taking control".

Here are a few tips to help get poo in the loo:

If you are prescribed medicine take it! Because your bottom has been full of poo for a long time your back passage may be overstretched. It is time to retrain your bowel (the area where poo should pass through before ending up in the toilet). So your bowel now needs to have time to work properly and avoid being overstretched. Time to get poo back to it's normal size. If you feel the need to poo, don't hold on, even if in school, as it is our bodies' way of telling us it's time to let poo out.



This is the correct position to sit on the toilet to help get poo in the loo. Keep your feet flat on the floor and use a footstep to stop your feet dangling and to keep your knees higher than your hips.

Picture courtesy of Victorian Continence Resource Centre 2010.

Make sure that you drink at least 6-8 water or squash drinks through the day to help keep your poo soft. You may find you will be able to concentrate better in school and feel more alert.

Plan to sit on the toilet after meals, (breakfast lunch and tea) to try to get poo in the loo. The best time to do this is 10-20 minutes after a meal, making use of your bowel's natural movement after you have eaten. Remember, everyone will be so proud of you.



Lots of children do not like to poo in school. If this sounds like you then talk to your parent or school nurse. They can arrange a 'pass' so you can use the loo whenever you need to, so you're not hanging on! If you need a more private area to help you poo in school then this can be arranged.

Try to have plenty of exercise, for at least an hour throughout the day, get up and move your body!

Ditch the iPad, Xbox and Playstations!

The 'change4life' website has lots of great ideas to get more active and meal swap ideas, have a look!

www.change4life.co.uk



Try to eat more fibre. It helps water stay in your poo which keeps it soft. Fibre is found in fruit, vegetables, beans, pulses, wholemeal bread, baked beans and wholegrain breakfast cereals.

Remember you are not alone!

It is not your fault if you can't get poo in the loo and we are here to help and guide you.

So remember to drink plenty of water, sit on the loo after meals, run around a lot and eat lots of fruit and vegetables. Be happy!

Make sure you keep a good diary so we have the correct information to help us give you the best possible help and treatment.



What medicine will I need to take?

The first medicine we use to help you get poo in the loo is called a Macrogol. It is a white powder in a sachet that is mixed with a specific amount of water. It works by locking water in the poo making the poo softer and easier to pass. Cordial can be added to the solution. Another medicine can be added to help you move your poo along.



The Macrogol comes in an adult formula for children 12 years and above. The usual dose is 1-4 sachets but can vary from child to child.

Some children can be so 'bunged up' with poo that they really struggle to get out any poo and are said to be impacted. The first sign of this is often that you start to have lots of soiling accidents (poo in pants), which you cannot help.

There is a big poo traffic jam and the poo sneaks out without you being aware!

This is treated by taking the Macrogol sachets every day as prescribed by your doctor. Each day you increase the number of sachets you take. The regime usually lasts for about a week. Doctors and Nurses often call this a disimpaction regime. This gives the bowel a good clear out, a bit like flushing out a pipe! But don't worry it takes a couple of days for the medicine to work so it won't work straight away. The poo is likely to become soft and runny with hard bits in. Don't stop, keep going. The medicine is doing it's job and getting rid of the unwanted poo.

It is very important that the medicine is not stopped too early. After your poos are all cleared out your nurse will help you make a plan on how much medicine to take going forwards. Soon you will feel much better!

So come on let's get poo in the loo! Lets beat the blues and out with the poos!



Useful contact details

www.eric.org.uk

www.bbuk.org.uk/children-young-people/

www.letstalkaboutpoo.eric.org.uk

www.thepoonurses.uk

Paediatric Continence Team Tel: 01253 953042

Let's get poo in the loo was first written by Victoria Ela, Continence Nurse, and adapted by Angela Ayoma, Lynne O'Keeffe and Jodie Walsh for this booklet.

Other sources of information:



Paediatric Continence Team:
Telephone: **01253 953042**



Hospital switchboard
Telephone: **01253 300000**

Patient Relations Department

The Patient Relations Department offer impartial advice and deal with any concerns or complaints the Trust receives.



You can contact them via tel: **01253 955589**
or by email: **bfwh.patientrelations@nhs.net**

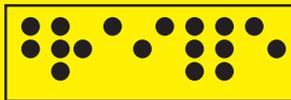


You can also write to us at: Patient Relations Department, Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Blackpool Victoria Hospital, Whinney Heys Road, Blackpool FY3 8NR



Further information is available on our website: **www.bfwh.nhs.uk**

If you'd like a large print, audio, Braille or a translated version of this booklet then please call: **01253 955520**



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