

Easing Infant Constipation

Symptoms

- Greater than **4-5 days** without a bowel movement
- **Hard** stools that are difficult or painful to pass
- Abdominal **pain**, such as stomachaches, or cramping
- Rectal **bleeding** from tears, called fissures
- Poor appetite
- Irritable behavior

Diet

Infants can become constipated upon introduction of solids after primarily following a diet of breastmilk or formula.

- **More constipating**: bananas, applesauce, rice or oatmeal cereals, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, squash
- **Get things moving**: barley cereals, apricots, peaches, plums, pears, prunes, spinach, peas, green beans, carrots

Improper mixing of formula or excessive cereal added to bottles can worsen constipation. Avoid this practice, unless instructed by your healthcare provider.

Alternative Options

- Trial offering 0.5 oz (15 mL) of prune or pear **juice** daily. Work up to a *maximum* of 2 oz per day as needed.
- Try mixing fruits and vegetables together in a **smoothie**!
- Tummy massage, bicycling legs, or warm bath can help relax baby and **stimulate bowel movement**.
- Is your child on a **multivitamin with iron**? Talk to your healthcare provider about alternatives.
- Age-specific **probiotic** as recommended by your doctor or dietitian

Avoid

Avoid **karo syrup** and **honey**. While effective at stimulating bowel movements, they pose a risk of botulism, increase the risk for dental caries by continued exposure to sugar, and increase taste affinity for sweetness with increased risk for childhood obesity.