

# Preventing constipation

Constipation can occur for many reasons. Some medications and illnesses may make it hard to get enough fibre and fluid each day. This means you may be more likely to have constipation. Try the ideas below to help keep your bowels regular.

**Note:** Remember to increase fibre slowly and to drink enough fluid. If you increase the amount of fibre you eat without drinking enough it can make your constipation worse.

## Eat plenty of high fibre grains

- Eat breakfast cereals high in fibre such as bran, wheat biscuits and oats.
- Try adding brown rice, barley and pasta to soups, stews and casseroles.
- Choose wholegrains, multigrain or wholemeal breads.

## Eat two serves of fruit each day

- One serve of fruit is a medium sized piece of fruit (like an apple), a cup of tinned fruit or half a cup of 100% fruit juice.
- Try stewing fruits such as pear, apricot and apple. Add them to cereals or your favourite dessert.
- Try drinking pear or prune juice.

## Eat five serves of vegetables each day

- A serve of vegetable is a half a cup of cooked vegetables or one cup of uncooked salad vegetables.
- Try to include vegetables in as many meals as you can.
- Try to eat foods with a variety of colours.
- Try adding legumes (like split peas, lentils or chickpeas) to soups or casseroles.

## Drink plenty of fluids every day

- Aim for at least eight glasses of fluid each day.
- You may need more in warmer weather.
- Fluids can include, water, tea and coffee, juice and milk drinks. Soup can also count as a fluid.

## Get active

- Being active will help to keep your bowels regular.
- If you are unsure about activities that are suitable for you, talk to your GP or an Exercise Physiologist.