



## **Key advice!**

Don't be careless about constipation – it IS important to excrete our wastes regularly

Don't rely on commercially produced laxatives or probiotics

Understand their limitations and potential side effects

Be prepared to change food preferences to improve how your body is functioning

Incorporate food sources of probiotics and prebiotics on a daily basis to help keep yourself healthy

If you need extra help, choose a food based bowel stimulant like Motion Potion

Choose a good quality probiotic product with proven species and strains

Challenge the seller to justify a good brand

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## **Cautions**

Many medications can cause constipation as a side-effect. Always discuss this with your prescribing practitioner and ask for advice.

Some existing gut disease may require special consideration because a damaged gut lining or adverse gut microbiome can cause unpleasant reactions to the food you eat.

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## **How can you help yourself relieve constipation?**

- Chew well to stimulate digestive juices and start carbohydrate digestion in your mouth
- Have a Tbsp of apple cider vinegar in water ½ hour before meals to stimulate stomach acid
- Include bitter foods to stimulate bile needed for fat emulsion and release of digestive enzymes (e.g. lots of rocket leaves!)
- Have some raw food e.g. salad starter, to provide digestive enzymes
- Avoid processed and refined carbohydrate foods, which reduces stomach acid production and are nutrient depleting
- Include small portions of protein with each meal to promote stomach acid production (note: animal protein is best for this; vegetarians should be sure to get complete protein from plant food, and include zinc containing foods)
- Include quality fats, e.g. coconut oil, avocado, extra virgin olive oil, fats from grass fed animals, to promote bile acid production and assist gut motility: bile is a natural laxative. We also need emulsified fats to absorb fat soluble vitamins ADEK

Try this: Remove wheat, dairy and other grains...they can damage the gut lining in some people, and which impairs digestion and allows undigested proteins to get into the blood stream causing inflammatory diseases.



## Guide to being constipation free with healthier digestive function and gut microbiome

- Be well hydrated with mineralized water to avoid dehydration: 30 – 35 ml per kg body weight is an appropriate quantity to be drinking
- Add quality Celtic sea/Himalayan rock salt to your food to provide sodium and other mineral electrolytes needed for proper thyroid and adrenal function; a sluggish thyroid and adrenals is a cause of constipation.
 

Try this: add a ½ tsp of sea salt AM and PM.  
Does it help your bowels?
- Also include natural food sources of sodium in your regular diet e.g. sea vegetables, fish, shell fish, meat; beets, carrots, celery, spinach, turnips.
- Eat probiotic foods: a good quality sauerkraut or kimchi; good quality yoghurt with active probiotics, if not allergic to dairy;
 

Try this: eat 3-8 prunes a day for a week
- Eat prebiotic foods that “feed” healthy gut bacteria.
- Include ground flaxseeds in your food for soluble fibre (called lignans) and/or add chia seeds to water/juice/smoothies for soluble fibre. Soluble fibre absorbs water to form a gel that softens stools (but will also absorb watery diarrhea).
- Eat more vegetable fibre, which bulks our stools and promotes regular bowel movements.

Helpful supplements	Used to...	Contains...
Flordis Iberogast <a href="http://www.iberogast.ca/what-is-iberogast/">http://www.iberogast.ca/what-is-iberogast/</a> available from some pharmacies	to relieve irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and indigestion including heartburn, bloating, cramping, nausea and abdominal pain	Iberis amara (prokinetic), Angelica, Chamomile, Caraway Fruit, St. Mary's Thistle, Lemon Balm Leaves, Peppermint Leaves, Celandin, Liquorice Root (in alcohol extract)
Metamucil - Psyllium	Mucilaginous – relieves constipation by absorbing water that increases stool bulk.  Take 1-2 X daily, 1-2 tsp in a half glass of water, followed by another glass water – as it can cause bowel obstruction if water is inadequate. Also avoid inhaling the powder.	
Slippery elm bark powder	Demulcent soothes acidic or irritated mucous membranes – used to relieve both constipation and diarrhea.  Mix 1 Tbsp with a little filtered water, then slowly add more water to make a thick milk shake consistency. Drink twice a day between meals.	
Swedish bitters	Take 2-3 tsp in ½ glass water ½ hour before meals to stimulate appetite, stomach acid, bile production and digestion.	Information about ingredients here: <a href="http://www.aussiehealthproducts.com.au/digestion-gut-health.php?id=73878&amp;Hilde-Hemmes-Swedish-Bitters---Tincture-500mL">http://www.aussiehealthproducts.com.au/digestion-gut-health.php?id=73878&amp;Hilde-Hemmes-Swedish-Bitters---Tincture-500mL</a>



## **Probiotic foods = fermented foods**

### **Sauerkraut**

Homemade or a quality unpasteurised sauerkraut is rich in Lactobacilli species and free of casein (hence suitable for people allergic to dairy protein).

Try [www.peaceloveandvegetables.com.au](http://www.peaceloveandvegetables.com.au)

- Start with a tsp serve with your meals, and increase serving size as your tolerance improves.
- If sauerkraut tastes too acid, try adding some bicarbonate of soda to neutralize a strong acid ferment.

CAUTION: Sauerkraut may be problematic for people sensitive to D-lactate or with histamine intolerance

### **Caution about D-Lactate intolerance**

Some people cannot process a form of lactic acid, called D-lactate, produced by Lactobacilli species, particularly Lactobacillus acidophilus, leading to acidic conditions in the body.

This may be more of a problem when dosing with probiotics containing mainly D-lactate probiotic species, but watch out for symptoms of lactic acidosis:

- episodes of weakness
- loss of muscle co-ordination
- nausea
- confusion
- slurred speech
- dehydration
- severe lethargy or chronic fatigue.

### **Fermented foods are high in histamine**

#### **Yoghurt and kefir**

When you're feeling better, then try a quality yogurt (homemade or Yalna Biodynamic available from Woolworths)

You can make Kefir yoghurt (a thin fluid) with Nature's Goodness starter as follows:

- Stir contents of 1 sachet into 1L milk.
- Leave for 24-36 hr at 20°C until kefir starts to settle.
- Then place in fridge for 12 hr, until it forms a smooth consistency. You can flavor with fruit or a pinch of salt.
- Keep a half glass as a starter for the next 1L batch.
- You can do this another 3X – i.e. 1 sachet can make up to 5L kefir.

A quality yoghurt should have very little lactose, but still contains casein, and no added sugar. Therefore suitable for people with lactose intolerance, but not dairy allergies.

Cost of 5 sachets about \$9 i.e. less than \$2 plus cost of milk to make 5L of drinking yoghurt!

<http://www.naturesgoodness.com.au/Kefir-Turkish-Yoghurt.html>



## Guide to being constipation free with healthier digestive function and gut microbiome

You can make coconut kefir by adding the probiotic starter to a can of coconut milk.

My version: I warmed 270 ml coconut milk to about 37°C, stirred in a ¼ tsp of dairy free probiotic powder and left it in a thermos flask for 24 hours, then stored in fridge. Delicious and completely dairy free!

### Kombucha

Kombucha is a probiotic, low carbohydrate drink. Can be bought from most health stores. I recommend Amphore for the integrity of their production process and quality of product, with lowest sugar and most therapeutic value (tastes great!). <http://www.amphore.com.au/>

Kombucha is also easy to make yourself at home, but it will usually have quite high residual sugar levels.

### Prebiotic foods = resistant starch and fibre

Prebiotics feed the probiotics.

Resistant starch feeds Bifidobacteria. Food sources easy to include in your meals are:

- Cold boiled potatoes or cold cooked rice – low GI
- White beans e.g. cannellini beans

Insoluble vegetable fibre feeds Bifidobacteria. But increase fibre intake gradually, because...

In sensitive people, prebiotic foods can cause rapid fermentation that releases gas too fast leading to bloating with pain and diarrhea or constipation, depending on the balance of colonic bacteria.

These people need to follow low fibre, low carbohydrate and low prebiotic diets while re-establishing healthy gut flora.

### Synbiotic food provide probiotics AND prebiotics

e.g. Supergreen powder drinks

Hint: Sunwarrior Supergreens with Peppermint is a more palatable drink!  
<http://www.sunwarrior.com/store/ormus-greens.html>