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Know your child's stool and what to do

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Regular bowel movements are very important for your child's health. This article can help you identify whether your child is experiencing irregular bowel movements such as diarrhea or constipation and help you find a solution to improve it.

The two most common bowel problems that occur among children are constipation and diarrhea. Monitor your child's bowel movements to identify which of these problems are bothering your little one.

Symptoms of Constipation:

- Hard, pebble-like excrete or poop that is painful to pass.
- Your child strains to pass poop or experiences dry and hard poop.
- Infrequent bowel movements – It's normal for your child to go 2-3 times a day but, if your child has missed motions for two weeks, then it is advisable to consult a doctor.
- Frequent excretion of runny poop- Runny poop that slips out without your child knowing, it is often seeping around a larger mass of poop in the bowel.
- Your child may be irritable, refuse to consume food and complain of stomach aches or soreness.

Symptoms of Diarrhea:

Diarrhea is often caused by germs like bacteria, viruses and parasites present in your child's bowel. Symptoms of diarrhea can be easily identified.

- Easily flowing poop
- Frequent bowel movements with watery poop



Solution to Diarrhea and Constipation

Encourage your child to follow a wholesome diet plan that includes plenty of water and consume food rich in fibre such as whole cereals, vegetables, pulses, Apples, Bananas, Guava, etc.

- Instill healthy eating habits in your kids, which help them stay fit and strong throughout the day.
- Pay attention on how to make your child eat healthy food.
- In addition to other vegetables and fruits, make sure that your child also eats Peach, Pear, Plum, Prune and Peas twice a day.
- Ensure your child follows a regular routine that consists of healthy meals, regular exercises and outdoor games.
- Avoid a diet that is rich in fat and sugar.
- Teach your child to not hold back her/his poop. Explain to him/her that it is important for him/her to empty his/her bowel whenever nature calls, and avoid treating the toilet as a dirty place as this may cause your child to avoid going for bowel movements.
- During diarrhea, your child may lose fluids quickly, therefore give her/him good food and plenty of fluids such as water, rice water, tender coconut water, salty-sweet lime juice and child oral rehydration salts (ORS).
- To get your child into the habit, encourage him/her to sit in the toilet about three times per day after meals.
- Children can develop chronic constipation in case they are intolerant to cow milk proteins, consult a doctor to find out.

Diarrhea can have other causes as well and should be a concern if your child frequently suffers from it. See a doctor in case you feel your child suffers from chronic diarrhea or constipation with signs of abdominal pain, vomiting, loss of appetite, liquid stools lasting more than a week. You can also opt for oral supplements that may help assist your child with constipation, however it is advisable to consult a doctor before trying such methods. Consult a Health Care Professional, if your child's poop is not regular or soft as there may be underlying causes resulting in a malfunction of the bowel movement.