

Constipation Action Plan for Children (Printable)

What is Constipation?

Constipation means your child has **hard, painful, or infrequent stools**, or avoids going to the toilet because it hurts or feels uncomfortable.

Home Plan (What You CAN Do)

1. Fluids (Very Important)

- Encourage **regular water intake** throughout the day
- Water is best; milk in normal amounts is okay
- Limit sugary drinks and juice

2. Fiber (Food Support)

Offer fiber-rich foods daily:

- Fruits: pears, apples, berries, prunes
- Vegetables: broccoli, peas, carrots
- Whole grains: whole-wheat bread, oats, brown rice

→ Increase fiber **slowly** to avoid gas or bloating.

3. Toilet Routine (Key Step)

- Sit your child on the toilet **5–10 minutes after meals**
- Do this **1–2 times daily**, even if they don't feel the urge
- Use a **footstool** so feet are supported
- Keep the atmosphere **calm and stress-free**

4. Positive Reinforcement

- Praise effort, not results

- Sticker charts or small rewards can help
 - Never punish or shame
-

What NOT to Do

- **✗** Do not force your child to stool
 - **✗** Do not ignore stool withholding
 - **✗** Do not stop prescribed laxatives suddenly without medical advice
 - **✗** Do not use enemas or suppositories unless advised by a doctor
 - **✗** Do not blame the child — constipation is common and treatable
-

Red Flags – Seek Urgent Care / ER If Your Child Has:

- Severe belly pain with vomiting
 - Blood in stool not explained by a small fissure
 - Swollen or hard abdomen
 - Fever with constipation
 - Sudden constipation in an infant
 - Weight loss or poor growth
 - Black or white-colored stools
-

When to See Your Doctor

- Constipation lasts **more than 2–3 weeks**
 - Painful stools continue despite home measures
 - Stool accidents or stool leakage occur
 - Toilet refusal or fear worsens
 - Your child needs regular laxatives
 - You are unsure or worried at any point
-

Important Reminder

Early treatment works best. Constipation often needs **time, patience, and consistency** to fully resolve.

Small Disclaimer

This action plan is for **general education only** and does not replace medical advice. Always follow your healthcare provider's recommendations for your child.
