

# Constipation

## Overview

Constipation is quite common in school-aged children and toddlers starting to potty train as they can forget to drink water, are easily distractible, often do not spend time on the toilet to stool, and may be more picky with their eating.

Constipation can present as hard, pellet-like stools with abdominal pain and straining on the toilet. Constipation can also present as intermittent abdominal pain with occasional loose stools. Even if your child has a bowel movement every day, she/he could still be constipated with softer/liquid stool going around harder pieces of stool in the colon.

## Home Care

- Have your child sit on the toilet twice daily after meals (after breakfast and dinner).
- Increase water intake. Give your child a water bottle for school/daycare and ask teachers to encourage water intake.
- Increase fiber intake – fruits, vegetables, whole grains.
- Limit sugary foods and highly processed foods. Encourage whole foods.
- Increase Exercise/Exercise daily – playing outside, running, playing a sport, etcetera.
- Consider an over the counter probiotic and/or fiber supplement for your child.

## Miralax

Miralax for mild to moderate constipation. Other stool softeners or laxatives may be considered as well at an office visit.

If your child has used Miralax in the past and you are comfortable with dosing for your child, it is OK to start using Miralax before scheduling a visit with a Mountain Kids Pediatric provider.

Miralax is a powder that is mixed with 6–8 ounces of water or juice that pulls water into the colon to help stimulate a bowel movement.

## Concerning Symptoms

**GO TO ER OR URGENT CARE:** Severe persistent abdominal pain, blood in stool (not just small streaks on outside of stool), unable to have a bowel movement over 4–5 days, abdominal pain with persistent vomiting, significant pain localized to right lower quadrant of abdomen with or without a fever, or other life-threatening symptoms.