

lifelax

laxatives and your
constipation

*diet and lifestyle in the
management of constipation*





what are laxatives

Laxatives are medicines taken to encourage bowel movements to relieve constipation.

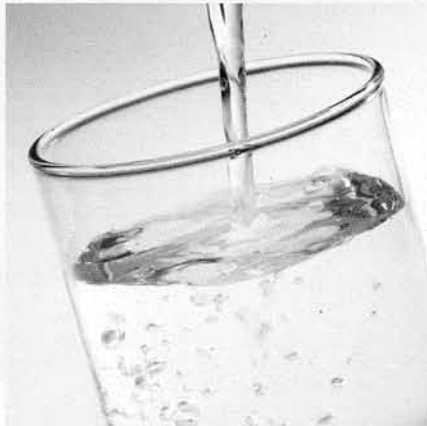


types of laxatives

There are a number of types of laxatives which work by different mechanisms to help relieve your constipation.

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taking laxatives

With all laxatives drink at least 8-10 glasses of liquid per day which will help make the stool softer and easier to pass.

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laxatives and your bowels

If your bowel habits suddenly change for longer than two weeks, or keeps changing, check with your doctor before using a laxative.



If you have any questions about the use of laxatives, check with your practice nurse or doctor.

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the 'laxative habit'

People may overuse laxatives which may lead to a dependency on them.

Overuse of some laxatives may cause damage to the intestines and bowel function.

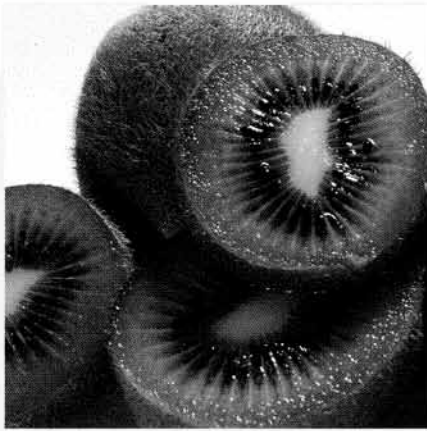
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precautions when using laxatives

Don't take any type of laxative if you experience: stomach or lower abdominal pain, cramping, bloating, soreness, nausea, or vomiting.

Check with your doctor as soon as possible.



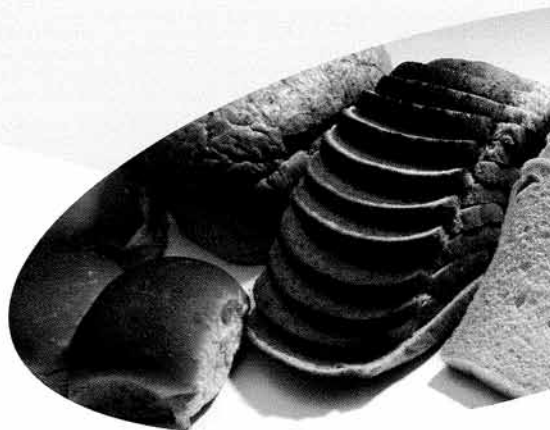
Don't take any type of laxative for more than a week unless prescribed by your doctor.

This is true even when you have had no results from the laxative.

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Don't take laxatives within 2 hours of taking other medicine as the effect of the other medicine may be reduced.



Don't take laxatives if you don't need them.

If you miss a bowel movement for a day or two
– don't worry, don't take a laxative, its normal!

If you develop a skin rash while taking a laxative
– check with your doctor.

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Remember you can help your constipation by:

- Being more active: remember to drink more.
- Drinking plenty of fluid: about 8-10 cups per day – try soft drinks and not too much strong tea or coffee.
- Eating more fibre rich foods such as wholegrain breads, cereals and porridge: remember to drink plenty.



- Eating more fruit and vegetables.
- Listening to your body: go to the toilet when it tells you to and leave enough time for toileting.

You may find you have some bloating and wind at first – but as your bowel becomes used to the extra fibre this will settle down.

Follow your doctor's advice about how to take your laxatives. Laxatives are to provide short-term relief only, unless otherwise directed by a doctor.

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