

10. GOING TO THE TOILET

Constipation is a common problem.



Reviewed September 2023. Free to use for personal use and with people you support. **This checklist can be downloaded from www.surreypb.org.uk**

Other common problems include
continence problems and urine infections.

Constipation is when you can't have a poo and
can be caused by many different things.

Some medications
like anti-depressants
and iron tablets can
cause people to be
constipated.



Not drinking enough,
eating enough fibre,
or not doing enough
exercise can also
cause constipation.

THINGS TO CHECK

1

Does anyone think you may have a bowel problem (having a poo)?



Problems can include:



Having diarrhoea a lot



Being constipated a lot



Pain when having a poo

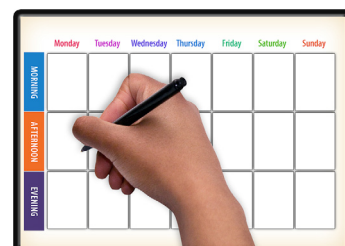


Blood in your poo

Make an appointment to see your doctor if you have any problems.

How often should you have a poo?

The normal range is from 3 times a day to 3 times a week. If you poo any more or less than this you should tell your doctor.



Also talk to your doctor if your bowel habits have changed recently.


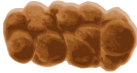


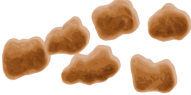
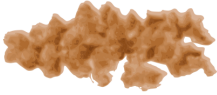
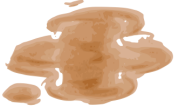
The Bristol Stool Chart

This shows pictures of different types of poo.

Types 1–2 indicate constipation, with 3 and 4 being ideal (especially type 4), as they are easy to pass while not containing too much liquid.

Types 5, 6 and 7 are tending towards diarrhoea.

Bristol Stool Chart

Type 1		Separate hard lumps, like nuts (hard to pass)
Type 2		Sausage-shaped but lumpy
Type 3		Like a sausage but with cracks on the surface
Type 4		Like a sausage or snake, smooth and soft
Type 5		Soft blobs with clear-cut edges
Type 6		Fluffy pieces with ragged edges, a mushy stool
Type 7		Watery, no solid pieces. Entirely Liquid

Attribution: Kyle Thompson is the copyright holder of The Bristol Stool Chart

THINGS TO CHECK



The NHS Bowel Cancer Screening Programme.

Men and women aged 60-69 registered with a GP in England will be sent an invitation for screening through the post.

It is being extended in England to those aged 70 to 75.

2

Does anyone think you may have a bladder problem (having a wee)?



Problems can include:

Prostate problems can make men need a wee more often.

- Pain or stinging when weeing.
- Smelly or cloudy urine.
- Blood in the urine.
- Difficulty starting to wee.
- Going for a wee a lot, (more than 10 times in 24 hours).
- Going for a wee more than once or twice in the night.
- Dribbling wee.



Make an appointment to see your doctor if you have any problems.

Bladder infections



If you have problems weeing your doctor can check to see if you have a bladder or urinary infection.

A bladder infection can make people behave in a confused way.

3

Do you need more support with using the toilet or hygiene?



You may need reminding to wash your hands properly after using the toilet. Poor hygiene can cause illnesses.



You may need someone to remind you when you need to use the toilet.

There may be a health problem causing you to wet yourself.

Your doctor can help, and may refer you to a specialist continence service.

Continence sheets and pads can help some people.



4

Do you need a more accessible toilet at home?



If you are finding it difficult to use your toilet at home it can be adapted to make it more accessible.

Talk to your doctor and your social worker (if you have a social worker).

USEFUL WEBSITES

Easy Health

Easyhealth is run by an organisation called Generate Opportunities Ltd.

There are Easy Read leaflets about 'bowels and bladder' designed by many different organisations.

Look in the 'Health Leaflets' section.



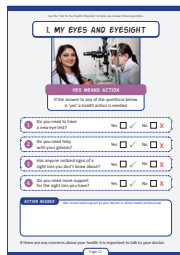
www.easyhealth.org.uk

USING THIS CHECKLIST

This checklist is a part of The Health Action Planning toolkit available from www.surreypb.org.uk

The Health Action Planning toolkit is free to use.

- There are 20 other checklists in the series covering a wide range of health issues.
- There is a Health Action Plan template for your checklist answers.



The Health Action Planning Toolkit was developed by Mike Leat from The Clear Communication People Ltd in partnership with Surrey & Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust health professionals and other health professionals in Surrey.

Special thanks to members of the Health Action Planning Group for their support and advice: Phil Boulter, Matthew Box, Kathryn Fisher, Maria Gainsford, Gemma Hare, Patrick Howarth, Denise Souter and Susann Stone

The Health Action Planning Toolkit is intended as a aid to support people with learning disabilities to access the support and advice of qualified health professionals. The Clear Communication People Ltd take no responsibility for medical diagnosis, advice and treatment given in conjunction with the use of this checklist.

- Easy Pics imagenbank © The Clear Communication People Ltd
- Some photosymbols used - go to www.photosymbols.com



The **Clear Communication** People Ltd

The development of this toolkit was made possible by initial funding from The Learning Disability Partnership Board in Surrey, and further funding from The South East Health Quality Forum.

The Clear Communication People Ltd also helped fund the development.