

Medicines for Treating Constipation

Important tip: All of these medications come in generic brands. Certain flavors may only be available in name brands. Using the generic version is absolutely acceptable. They are just as effective as name brands and often cost much less. The pictures and names listed below are just a sample of what is available.

Polyethylene glycol (MiraLAX®)

- Other brand names are ClearLax®, Laxaclear®, Smoothlax®

How does it work?

- Softens the poop by holding water inside.
- It is a white powder. It has no taste, smell, or color. It dissolves completely in liquid like water, juice, or sports beverages. It does not dissolve well in things like milk, orange juice, or carbonated drinks.

How do I give the medication?

- One dose is one capful which measures 17 grams or 4 teaspoons.
- Measure a capful of MiraLAX in 8 ounces of liquid, half of a capful in 4 ounces, or a teaspoon of MiraLAX in 2 ounces.



Senna

- Other brand names are Ex-lax[®], Fletcher's[®], Little Tummys[®], Senokot[®]
 - Fletcher's is root beer flavored
 - Fleet's[®] Pedia-lax brand has grape flavored strips (may only be available online)
 - Ex-lax has chocolate chewables available

How does it work?

- Increases and stimulates the activity of the bowel to help move the stool through.
- Comes in pills, liquids, capsules, chewables, and powder granules.

How do I give the medication?

- Mix the liquid with juice, milk or sweet foods to improve the taste.
- Give this medicine at bedtime if your child is taking it once a day.

Are there any side effects?

This medicine can cause cramps. Cramps mean the medicine is working and your child's intestine is trying to push the poop through. If your child feels cramping, this is a sign that they should go sit on the toilet and have a bowel movement.



Bisacodyl (Dulcolax®)

Some brands are:

- Dulcolax®
- Ex-Lax Ultra®
- Correctol®

How does it work?

- Stimulates the bowel to move the stool through, helps keep water in the stool to keep it soft
- Works within 6-10 hours

How do I give the medication?

- Give on an empty stomach with water. Do not crush, swallow pill whole. Comes in pill form only.
- This is sold over the counter as pills, suppositories, and enemas. Your child should take the pill form.



Milk of Magnesia

- Fleet's Pedialax® brand are watermelon-flavored chewables
- Phillip's® brand has a concentrated liquid that is strawberry flavored (concentrated means your child would need a smaller amount).
- Liquid form has a chalky taste. It may taste better mixed with powder flavorings like Nestle Quick®. It tastes best cold.

How does it work?

It works by pulling water into the colon causing the colon to squeeze more.

How do I give the medication?

- It comes in many forms such as pills, liquids, chewable tablets.
- Your doctor or nurse practitioner will give you the dose specific for your child and their needs.
- Works best if you drink a full glass of water (8 ounces) after you take the medicine.



Magnesium Citrate

- The kind your child needs is the liquid (most often a glass bottle)
- Tastes best if very cold
- Grape, cherry, and lemon flavored



Docusate

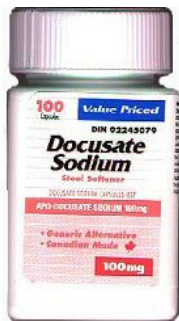
- Other brand names are Colace®, Stool Softener®, Kaopectate®, and Docusoft®

How does it work?

- Softens the poop by pulling water into the stool.

How do I give the medication?

- Comes in pills, liquid, and capsules.
- Liquid has a bitter taste. Mix it with milk, fruit juice, or infant formula to hide the taste.



Enema

- Also called “Fleets”
1. First give mineral oil enema. Allow it to sit and soften stool for about one hour.
 2. Next give Sodium phosphate (or saline) enema. This will help clean the stool out after it has softened (about 4 hours later).

First: Mineral Oil



Second: Sodium Phosphate or saline



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