

Why do I get constipation?

Constipation is very common after surgery. It can occur after surgery because of several reasons:

- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not eating enough fiber
- Not walking moving around as much
- Taking opioid (narcotic) pain medications

What can I do to treat constipation?

- Prevent or avoid it!
- If you feel the urge to go, go, do not wait.
 - Try going to the bathroom at the same time every day.
- Drink plenty of caffeine-free beverages (6-8 glasses) every day including: water, juice and milk.
- Walk around your home.
- Increase the amount of fiber in your diet. With extra fiber you will need to remember to drink liquids, they work together!
- You may use a stool softener such as Colace (docusate sodium) 100 mg, 1 capsule twice a day. This is important especially while taking prescription pain medications.
 - Stop the use of a stool softener if you develop loose bowel movements.

If the action steps listed above are not working, you may use a mild laxative such as:

- Senna
- Milk of magnesia
- Polyethylene glycol (Miralax)

When should I call my care team?

Call us if you have any of the following signs or symptoms:

- Cramps or abdominal pain that is not getting better.
- Diarrhea.
- You have not had a bowel movement for 3 days.
- Also call if you have any questions or concerns.

What is the number to call?

- During business hours, Monday - Friday 8 am - 5 pm call Gynecology Oncology at 734-647-8906.
- After hours, on weekends or holidays call Michigan Medicine 734-936-4000 and ask to speak with the gynecologic oncology fellow on call.

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