

Title:

Cleaning Up Your Act: Constipation and Its Effects

Word Count:

1022

Summary:

This article is about constipation. It defines what happens when a person experiences constipation.

Keywords:

diet, infection, surgery

Article Body:

The excretory system is a collection of organs whose main function is to rid the body of all its wastes.

Liquid wastes or urine is expelled from the body via the kidney, the bladder and the tubes connecting them.

Solid and or semi-solid wastes are eliminated from the body through the anus in a process called defecation.

CONSTIPATION

It is a digestive tract ailment where a sufferer excretes hard feces. When constipated, the large intestine is unable to move the feces through the body.

What causes constipation?

The three characteristics of constipation has each their own causes.

Hardening of the feces may be caused by:

- 1 Improper chewing or mastication of food. Chewing is the first step in digestion and is essential for the proper breakdown of food.
- 1 Insufficient fiber in the diet. Dietary fibers are the indigestible part of plant foods that help to move the stool through the digestive tract.
- 1 Dehydration or inadequate liquid intake. When water is in short supply in the body, the stool becomes hard and difficult to pass.
- 1 Medications. Diuretics that make the body expel water faster than normal contribute to constipation.

Paralysis of the colon or slow peristaltic movement can be caused by:

- 1 Medical conditions. Certain medical conditions such as hypothyroidism and hypokalemia can cause constipation.
- 1 Injured anal sphincter. It is scientifically known as patulous anus. When the anal sphincter is injured, it can cause constipation.
- 1 Medications. Medications such as loperamides, pain relievers and certain anti-depressants can cause constipation.

Dyschezia or difficulty defecating is usually results from often suppressing or ignoring the urge to defecate.

What complications arise when constipation is remained untreated?

Complications may arise if you continue to ignore constipation. These complications include:

- 1 Hemorrhoids. These are caused by too much strain on the anal sphincter while trying to pass hard stool.
- 1 Anal fissures. These are tears in the skin around the anus brought about by over-straining.
- 1 Rectal prolapse. This is when a small amount of intestinal lining is pushed out of the rectum.
- 1 Fecal impaction. This develops when hard stool are compacted tightly in the intestine.
- 1 Bowel perforation. This is when the hardened fecal matter punctures through the intestine.

How is constipation treated?

Constipation is an avoidable condition. Simple intervention that would entail a slight change in diet and lifestyle can help.

In case that the natural approach doesn't help with your constipation problem, enemas and colonic irrigation can be used.

If laxatives and other measures fail, manual disimpaction is performed on the sufferer. This is done by a doctor or a nurse.

In today's fast-paced lifestyle, it is easy to ignore what your bodies are telling you. People often ignore the signs of constipation.

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