

## CONSTIPATION MANAGEMENT IN CHRONIC PAIN

When you take pain medications (opioids, tricyclic antidepressants (e.g. Elavil), non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (e.g. Ibuprofen)) the bowel responds to the medication by slowing down (called decreased motility).

**Constipation can be painful. If not managed it can cause complete blockage and serious medical problems.**

It will be important to follow this plan to **manage constipation.**

**DIET:**

**It is important to maintain a diet high in fiber.**

(e.g. Bran, whole grain bread, whole grain cereals such as oatmeal, raisin bran, bran flakes, fresh fruits and vegetables, beans, dried fruits (prunes, raisins, dates) granola, and nuts.

**Drink plenty of non-caffeine fluids** (at least 8-10 eight-oz. glasses a day).

Hot liquids may help stimulate bowel activity.

**Avoid foods that increase constipation** (e.g. cheese, white bread, sweets, white rice, and pastas). (Your pharmacist may help you find generic products for many of the above medicines that may be cheaper in cost and just as effective.)

If stools get too loose. cut back on the medication.

**Do not** take anti-diarrhea medicine. It may take a little time to find the correct dose that works best for you.

Bulk laxatives such as Metamucil are not recommended for patients on large dose of pain medication. Bulk (Fiber) laxatives can lead to high blockage, which can be serious.

**Do not** allow yourself to go longer than 3 days without having a bowel movement without seeking advice.

Tel: (513) 322-7300  
Fax: (513) 322-7307

10550 Montgomery Rd.,  
Suite 34  
Cincinnati OH. 45242

CONTINUED ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE →



**MEDICATION:**

**If you take only occasional pain pills:**

Take Colace 100mg by mouth twice a day.

**If you are taking pain pills routinely:**

Take Senakot-**S** or **PeriColace** 2 tablets at Bedtime.

\*(Senakot is not the same as Senakot-**S**  
Colace is not the same as **PeriColace**)

**If you have no bowel movement in 24 hours:**

Increase Senakot-**S** or **PeriColace** to 2-4 tablets by mouth 2-3 times a day.

\*(Senakot is not the same as Senakot-**S**  
Colace is not the same as **PeriColace**)

**If you have no bowel movement in 48 hours:**

Take Dulcolax Tablets 2-3 tablets at Nighttime and up to 3 times during the day. (This should be in addition to the Senakot-**S** or **Pericolace**.)

**If you have no bowel movement in 72 hours:**

You need to call your doctor. You may need to be checked for an impaction. In addition you may need to take additional laxatives such as:

- Magnesium citrate, 8oz by mouth, or
- Miralax or
- Fleet
- Enema

---

Set aside 10-20 minutes a day to sit quietly on the toilet. Exercise daily, as tolerated. Walking is a good form of exercise.

If you become **severely constipated** or if you have **severe abdominal cramping, diarrhea, or nausea and vomiting**, call the Pain Management Service at (513) 322-7300, Monday through Friday from 8AM to 4PM.

Tel: (513) 322-7300  
Fax: (513) 322-7307

10550 Montgomery Rd.,  
Suite 34  
Cincinnati OH. 45242