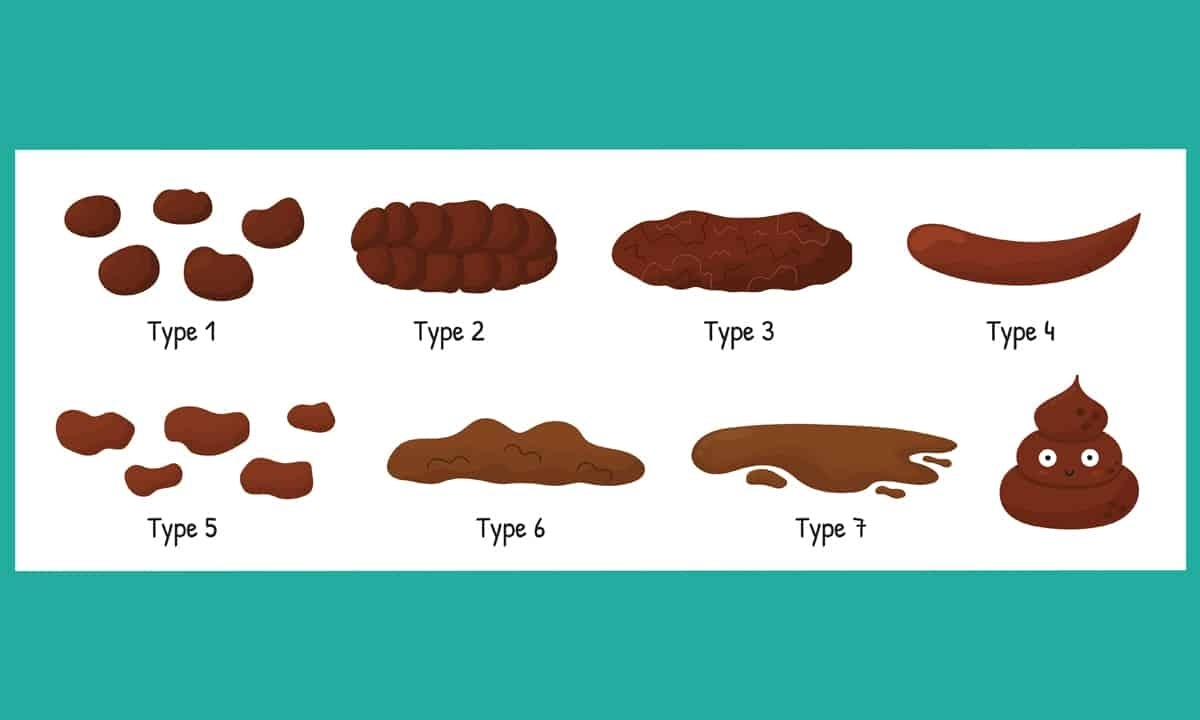
**Healthy Eating to Prevent Constipation**

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|  | **What is Constipation?**  Constipation is the uncomfortable and infrequent passage of stools with slow bowel movements. This can pose risks if chronic. |
|  | Signs of constipation include:   * Bowels not opening for 3 days * Bowels not opening 3 times per week * Stools which are hard, dry, and difficult or painful to pass |
|  | Some of these ‘red flags’ can also indicate constipation:   * Bleeding when passing stool * Unexplained weight loss * Iron deficiency anaemia * Bloating or abdomenal distention * Hard palpable mass * Vomit or reflux * History of colon cancer or inflammatory bowel disease |
|  | **Dietary Changes to prevent constipation**  Drink plenty of water, at least 8 full glasses daily. This hydrates stool. Other decaffeinated drinks also help, like milk, herbal tea, and juice. |
|  | Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables, and remove tough skins such as on squash or banana. Aim for at least 5-a-day to boost your fibre. |
|  | Have at least 2 kiwis or a handful of dried prunes (80g per day) with plenty of water. These are a source of prebiotics. |
|  | Sprinkle 1-4tbsp of linseeds, flaxseeds or chia seeds daily onto food such as cereal, salad, soup or smoothies. These are also prebiotics. |
|  | Try live yoghurt, fermented foods, or probiotic drinks, powder or tablets for at least 2 weeks. Probiotics promote good gut health. |
|  | Try wholegrain cereal, bread and pasta rather than white, and try beans and pulses like lentils and peas. These are a source of fibre. |
|  | **Physical Changes to prevent constipation**  Aim for at least 30minutes of physical activity per day, this will help to keep the bowel moving. |
|  | Take regular toilet breaks, and ensure correct positioning:   * sit with knees higher than hips * lean forwards * bulge out abdomen * straighten spine |
|  | Monitor stool output and frequency of bowel motions on a bowel chart using the Bristol Stool Chart. |

**Bristol Stool Chart**



**Bowel Chart**

