

Prevention and Treatment of Constipation

You may experience constipation after surgery as a result of anesthesia, narcotic pain medication, reduced physical activity, and alterations in your diet. To prevent constipation after surgery, it is strongly recommended that you take an over the counter stool softener and laxative for two weeks after surgery or while taking narcotic pain medications.

Below are the over the counter medications recommended to prevent constipation:

- Colace, 1 capsule, twice a day
- MiraLAX (polyethylene glycol), 1 capful (17-grams), daily

If you have not had a bowel movement by the third day after surgery, it is recommended that you try the following over the counter medications until you have a bowel movement:

- Dulcolax suppository, 1 suppository, daily as needed
- Fleet Enema, 1 enema, daily as needed
- Milk of magnesia, 30-mL, daily as needed
- Magnesium citrate, ½-bottle, daily as needed

Recommended dietary changes to prevent constipation include:

- Eating prunes or drinking prune juice
- Drinking at least eight 8-oz glasses of water a day
- Eating plenty of fruits and vegetables

If you have any questions or concerns regarding treatment for constipation, please call your physician's office at 815-316-2100 for further recommendations.