

Nutrition for constipation

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Abstract. According to WHO, at least 35% of the world's inhabitants suffer from constipation, and among older people over 60 years of age this figure is close to 80%. Although in reality this percentage is significantly higher, since not all patients consult a doctor with this delicate pathology.

Constipation is a disease characterized by problems with bowel movements, but it should be borne in mind that the number of bowel movements per week or per day is individual for each person and therefore one cannot talk about any specific norm, since this is largely determined by nutrition, age and individual physiological characteristics ^[3].

Key words: constipation , description , causes occurrence , types and symptoms , complications , prevention , treatment, useful products , folk dangerous means _ products

Causes

The main reason for the development of this pathology is a violation of intestinal motility, a discrepancy between the volume of contents of the large intestine and its capacity. There are the following types of constipation:

1. **hypodynamic** – develops in elderly people or in patients bedridden for a long time. Due to low physical activity, intestinal motility deteriorates, which leads to problems with bowel movements;
2. **toxic** - can occur due to heavy metal poisoning, in heavy smokers or when consuming large amounts of products containing tannins - strong tea and cocoa;
3. **chronic** is diagnosed when intestinal dysfunction lasts more than 3 months;
4. **inflammatory** – develops in diseases of the large or small intestine;
5. **medication** provokes long-term use of medications - diuretics, tranquilizers, anti-inflammatory drugs, antipsychotics;
6. constipation caused by **problems in the endocrine system** - diabetes, menopause, adrenal gland disorders;
7. **neurogenic** is associated with disturbances in the functioning of the nervous system - neuritis, depressive disorders, encephalitis, mental stress ^[3] ;
8. **mechanical** provoke tumors and adhesions in the intestines;
9. **proctogenic** develops due to problems in the anorectal area - hemorrhoids, adnexitis, fissures in the rectum.

Common causes of constipation include:

- incorrectly composed diet - insufficient amount of plant fiber;
- gastrointestinal diseases;
- sitting on the toilet for a long time;
- low physical activity;
- pregnancy;
- insufficient fluid intake (stool is 75% water);
- weakness of the rectal muscles;

- laxative abuse;
- sedentary lifestyle - the abdominal muscles weaken, and intestinal tone decreases accordingly;
- change of climatic zones;
- pregnancy;
- excess body weight;
- dysbacteriosis;
- Frequently ignoring the urge to defecate.

Constipation symptoms

The main symptoms of constipation are:

- rare bowel movements - less than 3 times a week;
- the need to push during bowel movements;
- discomfort in the rectal area;
- low stool weight – up to 35 g per day;
- feces that are hard in consistency and injure the mucous membrane;
- flatulence;
- abdominal pain;
- pale, loose skin with a yellowish tint;
- feeling of dissatisfaction after bowel movement;
- bloating;
- frequent belching;
- sleep disturbance.

Complications

If bowel movements are untimely, stagnation and compaction of stool occurs, which can lead to:

1. inflammatory processes, tumors, protrusion of intestinal walls, up to intestinal obstruction;
2. the occurrence of fecal plugs, which provoke the appearance of fecal ulcers;
3. dense feces can cause cracks in the anus and bleeding;
4. intoxication of the body;
5. colon cancer.

Constipation can be a companion to oncological and endocrine pathologies, as well as Parkinson's disease.

Chronic constipation can last for years, however, if signs such as blood in the stool, severe weakness, nausea and vomiting, or weight loss appear, you should immediately consult a doctor.

Forecast

With adequately prescribed therapy, the prognosis of the pathology is quite favorable. It should be taken into account that the chronic form of the disease can provoke the development of intestinal cancer, so patients with this pathology need to be regularly examined by a gastroenterologist.

Prevention

Preventive measures to prevent the development of constipation include:

- daily physical activity that helps strengthen the abdominal muscles (walking, skiing, swimming);
- compliance with the drinking regime;
- frequent split meals;
- If possible, go to the toilet at the same time to develop a habit;
- avoid stress;
- before visiting the toilet, do a self-massage of the abdomen;
- promptly treat pathologies that may be accompanied by constipation.

Treatment of constipation in official medicine

In order to diagnose chronic constipation, the patient should be interviewed to clarify the following points:

1. learn about stool consistency;
2. does the patient experience a feeling of incomplete bowel movement;
3. frequency of bowel movements during the week;
4. whether the stool contains impurities in the form of mucus, undigested pieces of food or blood;
5. the need to push hard when going to the toilet;
6. frequency of use of enemas and laxatives;
7. taking medications to treat chronic pathologies;
8. patient complaints of weight loss, weakness, abdominal pain.

After this, the gastroenterologist first performs superficial and then deep palpation of the abdomen.

Therapy should be comprehensive, usually it includes:

- **lifestyle changes** that involve drinking enough fluids, a special diet, and exercise;
- **laxatives** – drugs that help thin the intestinal contents and speed up the evacuation of stool;
- **lubricants** in the form of glycerin suppositories, vaseline or castor oils;
- **surgical method** - for irreversible inertia of the colon;
- **balneology** – drinking mineral waters;
- **physiotherapeutic procedures** - abdominal massage, electrophoresis with novocaine on the lumbar region, electropulse therapy;
- **acupressure** and acupuncture;
- **Colon hydrotherapy** .

Healthy foods for constipation

People suffering from constipation are recommended to include foods that have a laxative effect in their diet:

1. vegetables and fruits containing fiber [4] are not digested in the intestines, but at the same time softens and increases the volume of the intestinal contents and promotes its excretion. These include leafy greens, beets [5], squash [6] and zucchini , squash [7], cucumbers [8], plums [9], apples [10] and bananas [11];
2. dried plums and apricots;
3. baked goods made from wholemeal flour are also rich in fiber;
4. porridge from unprocessed oats [12], buckwheat [13], pearl barley, bulgur and millet;
5. meat, since animal connective tissue is also only partially digested;
6. products containing organic acids stimulate peristalsis and promote the accumulation of moisture in the stool. These include vegetable juices, two-day kefir, whey, ayran;

7. products with a high fat content [14]: lard, fatty meats, butter [15], vegetable oils, mayonnaise, sour cream, fish oil;
8. sesame seeds, avocado [16] ;
9. cold first courses such as okroshka and beetroot soup, cold drinks, ice cream. Cold provokes irritation of receptors in the mouth, which leads to increased peristalsis;
10. carbonated drinks.

Folk remedies for the treatment of constipation

Traditional medicine allows you to easily, delicately and safely solve the problem of constipation at home:

- take 2 tbsp on an empty stomach. spoons of castor oil, the result can be expected in 1.5 - 2 hours. Castor oil is effective even for persistent constipation;
- drink 1 teaspoon of aloe juice before breakfast for 2 weeks. In addition to the fact that aloe juice promotes mild stimulation of the intestinal walls, it is also known for its anti-inflammatory properties ^[1] ;
- add a few pieces of ginger to a cup of regular tea every day [17], and the drink should be hot;
- drink warm tea made from dandelion roots several times a day [18]. This drink stimulates the liver and gallbladder;
- add freshly squeezed lemon juice to drinking water daily [19];
- drink a glass of warm milk in the evening before bed with the addition of 1 teaspoon of ghee [20];
- brew senna grass and drink the decoction as tea during the day ^[2] ;
- tsp before breakfast . ash of dry sunflower stems.

Dangerous and harmful foods for constipation

Patients suffering from constipation are advised to exclude the following foods from their diet:

1. baked goods and fresh white bread;
2. strong tea, jelly and alcoholic drinks [21];
3. fried eggs;
4. vegetables that provoke fermentation processes in the intestines: garlic, onions, radishes, and legumes;
5. porridge from rice and semolina;
6. flour dishes - dumplings, dumplings, pasties, pies;
7. fast food and convenience stores;
8. soft wheat pasta;
9. smoked meats and pickles.

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