



By Catherine Apicella,
PT, PYT, PRPC

Better Bowel Movements

life and contribute to issues like hemorrhoids or pelvic organ prolapse.

Factors associated with constipation include low water and fiber intake, slow movement of the GI tract, muscle dysfunction, and stress. With so many contributing factors, an integrated approach to treatment is important. Physician evaluation of any sudden change in bowel habits or a chronic condition is essential, to rule out anything serious. Lifestyle interventions can also be very helpful. Some include:

1. Increased water intake: If you are dehydrated, your poop will be too! Your body needs adequate lubrication for stool to pass through your system.
2. Increased fiber intake: Fiber provides bulk that helps to scrub the colon as the poop passes through. It may take detective work to determine how much and which type of fiber will work best for you, but ideal

daily intake is 21-25 grams for women and 30-38 grams for men.

3. Increased physical activity: Movement helps increase the motility of your GI system.
4. Decreased stress: Finding an activity or habit, or simply practicing diaphragmatic breathing, to lower your stress level will help to facilitate the “rest and digest” function of the parasympathetic nervous system.
5. Proper toileting position: Using a squatty potty mimics the squatting position, which helps

improve the angle at which poop leaves your body; it also helps to relax your pelvic floor muscles.

If you are still having issues, additional help may be warranted. Pelvic floor therapists help you learn how to identify and correct dysfunctional muscle activation patterns that are causing you to tighten instead of relax when you need to poop, among other interventions. Interested in learning more? Give me a call and we can discuss how pelvic floor therapy can help you!

Constipation is the one of the most common gastrointestinal complaints in the US, affecting up to 27% of all Americans. Most of us will experience constipation at some point, defined as fewer than 3 hard, dry bowel movements per week that are difficult to pass and involve straining and/or a sensation of bloating. Constipation can significantly impact quality of



Breathe & Blossom

Catherine Apicella, PT, PYT, PRPC

919.452.6828 | breathe-blossom.com