

# Patient Information leaflet

## Constipation



### Lifestyle advice continued...

Eat foods containing plenty of fibre. Fibre from food stays in your gut and adds bulk and softness to the stools.

You may have some bloating and wind at first, and it can take up to four weeks to help your constipation. So it is best to increase your fibre slowly and make it a long term change. You will also need to drink lots of water with your high fibre foods.

*High-fibre foods include:*

- Fruit and vegetables. Aim to eat at least five portions of different fruit and vegetables each day
- Oats, nuts and seeds
- Wholegrain cereals, bran and wholemeal pasta, bread etc \*

Sorbitol is a sugar, which softens the stools and acts like a natural laxative. Sorbitol is found in fruits (and juices) such as apples, apricots, gooseberries, grapes (and raisins), peaches, pears, plums, prunes, raspberries and strawberries. The amount of sorbitol is about 5-10 times higher in dried fruit.

\* Sometimes bran and wholemeal may cause more bloating and cramps and worsen constipation in patients with IBS

### More information available at:

[www.patient.co.uk/health/constipation-in-adults-leaflet](http://www.patient.co.uk/health/constipation-in-adults-leaflet)  
[www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Constipation](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Constipation)  
[www.bladderandbowelfoundation.org](http://www.bladderandbowelfoundation.org)

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