

Tips for Success

This section includes simple tips to keep the bowel working well and will hopefully prevent bowel problems such as diarrhea, constipation and accidents.

- Stay on schedule. Do the bowel program at the same time each day.
- Do the bowel program as you learned it in rehabilitation.
- Try doing the bowel program 30 minutes after a meal. This may help with emptying.
- Massage the abdomen during the bowel program.
- Do not take laxatives or enemas unless your doctor tells you to do so.
- Drink 6-8 glasses of water daily.
- Eat a balanced diet that includes fruit, vegetables, and whole grain foods.
- Drink a hot/warm drink like coffee or tea 30 minutes before the bowel program. Sometimes a warm beverage helps the bowel to empty.
- Do not skip bowel programs or do them "halfway." This can cause constipation and bowel accidents.
- **Avoid** foods that cause diarrhea (spicy foods, alcoholic drinks).
- **Avoid or limit** foods that cause constipation (milk and dairy products, white breads, fatty foods, fried foods).
- Exercise (as OK for your health) regularly.