

Constipation



KANAKIA
Health Care

Dr. Raju Kanakia

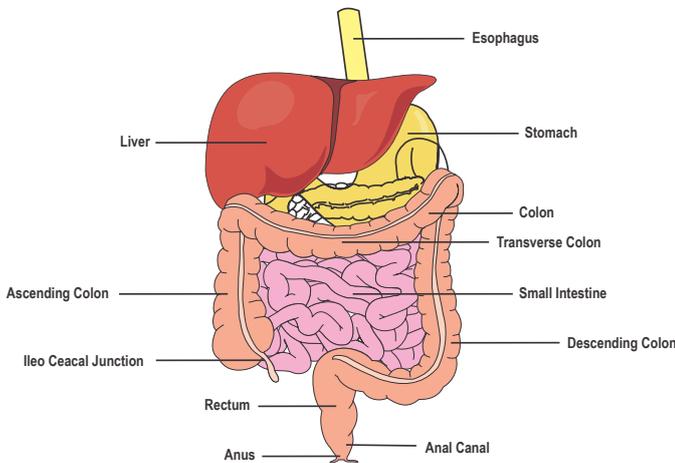
MD, DNB (Gastroenterology)

• Gastroenterologist • Hepatologist
• Interventional GI Endoscopist

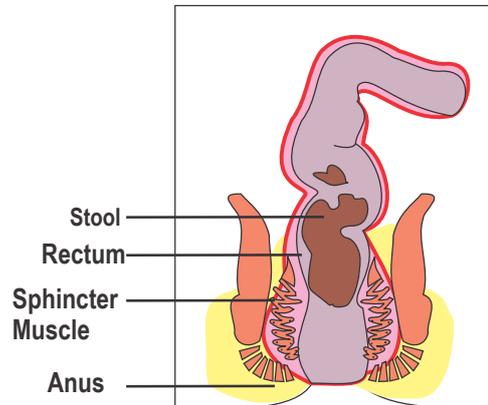
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What is the large intestine?

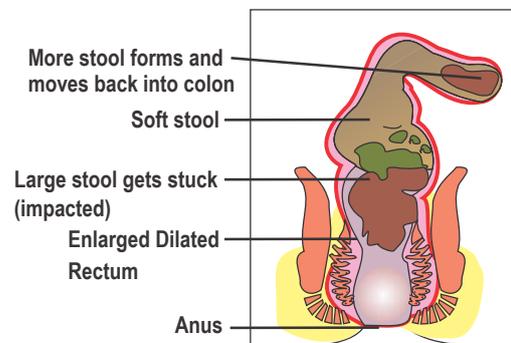
The large intestine is the continuation of the small intestine and is the last part of the digestive system. It begins at the ileo-caecal junction and ends with the rectum and anal canal. It measures about a meter in length. The function of the large intestine is to absorb water from the feces and to throw out the unwanted matter after digestion in the form of stools. Muscle contractions in the colon push the stool towards the anus. The caecum, appendix, colon, rectum and anal canal are the parts of the large intestine.



complaint by patients is subjective, and their definition is based on family, culture and own experience. At times, the soft stool leaks out resulting in overflow incontinence.



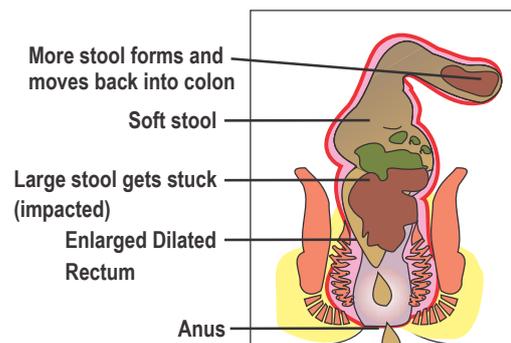
Normal



Chronic Constipation

What is constipation?

When the colon absorbs too much water and the stools become small, hard and dry, it results in constipation. The stools may be difficult to pass (painful or difficult to pass) or may be infrequent (less than three in a week). This happens because the movements of the colon are slow and sluggish and the stools move too slowly through the intestines. Constipation as a



Over Flow Incontinence

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Constipation



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How is constipation diagnosed?

Constipation is diagnosed based on the following symptoms:

- Difficulty in passing stools
- Straining
- Infrequent small hard stools
- Sense of incomplete evacuation

At times a rectal examination is done by the doctor, where a gloved finger is inserted in the rectum to look for bleeding or lumps.

What are the investigations for constipation?

X-ray of abdomen
Colonoscopy/Sigmoidoscopy
Radio-opaque marker
Anorectal motility study

When should you seek medical advice for constipation?

There are numerous home remedies for constipation and most patients have tried them. However, it is important to seek medical help in the following situations:

- When there is a change in the bowel habits.
- Constipation lasts longer than three weeks
- When constipation is severe
- Severe stomach pain on passing stool
- Black stools
- Anemia caused by lack of iron
- If there is fever, weakness, bleeding and weight loss

- Impacted stools
- Laxative dependency/addiction

What are the common causes of constipation?

- Not enough fiber, liquids in diet
- Excessive laxative use
- Disease that affect the nervous system: Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis
- Diseases that affect the intestines, colon or rectum
- Pelvic floor muscles do not relax properly
- Ignoring the urge to pass stools
- Some medications
- Changes in daily routine e.g. travel
- Old age
- Pregnancy
- Fissures and hemorrhoids
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) with constipation or IBS-C

What is the treatment for constipation?

- Life style changes
 - Eating foods high in fiber. Approximately 20-35 gms of fiber is recommended daily
 - Lots of water
 - Regular exercise
 - Not ignoring the urge to pass stools
- Over-the-Counter (OTC) medicines
 - Bulking agents
 - Osmotic agents
 - Lubricants
 - Stool softeners
 - Stimulant laxatives
- Prescription medicines
 - Lubiprostone
 - Linaclotide
- Enema
- Biofeedback
- Surgery

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