

# Constipation Action Plan

To be completed by your medical provider.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_


Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## GREEN ZONE 😊


pooping every 1-3 days

### Symptoms

- No straining to poop
- Your poop is soft:



or



### Plan

Great job! Keep taking this medication:

Miralax	½ cap	1½ caps	As needed
			Every other day
	1 cap	2 caps	1x a day
			2x a day


If you are having a lot of watery poop, cut down on your Miralax. We also suggest the everyday changes on the back of this sheet.

## YELLOW ZONE 😐


no poop for 3-5 days

### Symptoms

- Straining to poop
- Pain when pooping
- Your poop is hard:



or



### Plan

1. For 3 days, increase your dose to the following:

Miralax	½ cap	1½ caps	1x a day
			2x a day
	1 cap	2 caps	3x a day

Sometimes, Miralax is not enough. You might need another medication called a “stimulant laxative,” such as Senna or Dulcolax.

Medication Name	Dose	How Often

*Tip: Expect watery poop during the yellow zone.*

2. Stay hydrated! (At least 8 cups of clear liquids a day)

3. Call your doctor to let them know.

4. After 3 days, go back to the **green zone** plan.

## RED ZONE 😞

no poop for more than 5 days

### Symptoms

- Severe pain
- Blood in poop
- Poop is leaking
- Bloated tummy
- Low appetite
- Vomiting

### Plan

- Call your doctor or go to the Sick Clinic.** Your doctor may prescribe an enema or a glycerin suppository.
  - ⇒ Give the enema or suppository (instructions on back).
  - ⇒ After your child poops, go back to the **yellow zone** plan.
- Go to the emergency department if your child has severe pain lasting more than 2 hours,** or as instructed by your doctor.

# Additional Information

**Please note:** This action plan is only for constipation that is not because of another medical problem. Tell your doctor if your child has ever had any of the following:

- Did not poop within 48 hours after birth
- Symptoms started before 1 month old
- Family members with Hirschsprung disease
- Bloody poop with fever, mouth sores, joint pain, or rash
- Losing weight or not gaining weight
- Leg weakness
- Cystic fibrosis
- A skin dimple or a tuft of hair on the lower spine
- You are taking both Miralax and a stimulant laxative, and it is not getting better.

## Everyday Life Changes to Improve Constipation

- Eat lots of high-fiber foods like fruits, veggies, beans, oatmeal, brown rice, and brown bread. For some people, bananas can make their poop harder.
- Stay hydrated and drink plenty of clear liquids.
- If your child feels like they have to poop, they should not hold it in.
- If your child is not toilet trained yet, don't start until their poops are soft.
- Praise your child every time they poop. Do not punish them if they have an accident.
- **Toilet Retraining:** Sometimes, children who have been constipated for a long time lose the feeling of needing to poop. In this case, toilet retraining can be helpful:
  - ⇒ Sit on the toilet after every meal for at least 5 minutes
  - ⇒ Smaller children may need something under their feet to help them push.
  - ⇒ They should try to poop, but it is okay if they can't.

## Miralax\* dosing

Weight (kilograms)	Weight (pounds)	Green Zone Total Daily Dose	Yellow Zone Total Daily Dose
10-20 kg	22-43 lb	½ cap	1 cap
20-40 kg	43-88 lb	1 cap	2 caps
40-60 kg	88-132 lb	1½ caps	3 caps
Over 60 kg	Over 132 lb	2 caps	4 caps

\*Polyethylene glycol is the generic name for Miralax.

Miralax should be mixed into a liquid drink.

Please note: These are just suggestions. Your doctor may pick a different dose based on your symptoms or what has worked before.

## How to give an enema

- Lie your child on their side.
- Place the small tube inside your child's rectum. You can use petroleum jelly (Vaseline) to help the tube go in more easily.
- Flush the enema through the tube into your child's rectum.
- After 5-10 minutes, have your child sit on the toilet to stool.

### Fleet Enema Dosing

Age	Dose
2-5 years	½ pediatric fleet (33mL)
5-11 years	1 pediatric fleet (66mL)
12+ years	1 adult fleet (133mL)

## How to give a rectal suppository

1. Position your child: Lie your child on their side and bend the knees toward their chest. Alternatively, you can place them on their back with legs raised, as if changing a diaper.
2. Open the buttock cheeks until you can see the anal opening.
3. Gently insert the round end of the suppository into the anal opening using the tip of your index finger. The suppository should be placed 1/2 to 1 inch inside. It shouldn't fall back out.
4. Gently hold the buttock cheeks closed for 10-15 minutes.

### Other helpful tips:

- If the suppository is too soft to insert, you can chill it inside the refrigerator for 30 minutes or run under cold water before removing the wrapper.
- If you need to cut the rectal suppository, cut it lengthwise.
- If needed, you may use a water-based lubricant. Do not use petroleum jelly (Vaseline) to lubricate the suppository.

*St. Christopher's Hospital for Children is not affiliated with the brand names Miralax, Senna, Dulcolax, or Vaseline.*