

## MANAGING CONSTIPATION

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### What is Constipation?

- Bowel movements occurring less often than the normal pattern
- Hard stool
- Increased difficulty moving bowels

### What to report to the Hospice/Palliative care team?

- No bowel movement in 2 days or a change in the frequency of bowel movements
- Pain, cramping or tenderness
- A feeling of fullness or bloating
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Blood in stools
- Diarrhea or oozing of stools

### What can be done?

***The good news is that there is much you, your caregiver, and the hospice/palliative care team can do for constipation.*** The team will always try to discover the underlying cause and discuss treatments with your healthcare provider.

- Record when bowel movements have occurred
- Drink as much fluid (liquids) as is comfortable. Drinking warm liquids has benefited many patients
- Eat more fruits and fruit juices
- Increase physical activity if possible. Walking short distances can be beneficial
- Sit upright on toilet, commode or bedpan
- Establish routine times for toileting
- Take laxatives/stool softeners as ordered by healthcare provider. Avoid bulk laxatives if not taking in enough fluids
- Notify hospice/palliative care team if constipation continues