

CHECK UP & TUNE IN

THE SCOOP ON POOP

We love to share and celebrate what makes us unique, and while your bowel habits may be one of those things, it's not exactly dinner table conversation. If there is a topic we would rather not discuss, it's poop. Yet, it may be one of the greatest investigative tools for your health. Those small, digestive discomforts can sometimes be alleviated with simple dietary changes, or they could be warning signs of something gone awry. Want to know what your poop is telling you and how to make changes to improve your digestive health? Let's not be shy!



What's Normal?

"Regular" – It's a term we often use to describe healthy bowel function. Having a bowel movement 1-3 times a day to 3 times a week that is soft and easy to pass is ideal. But for many of us, this can be difficult to achieve due to factors like diet, fluids, medications, hormones, and lifestyle.

The Bristol Stool Chart is a globally recognized medical aid developed by Dr. Ken Heaton from the University of Bristol in 1997, as a self-diagnostic tool to help patients feel comfortable discussing their bowel habits. It classifies stool into 7 different types based on transit time and is used as a tool to track any gastrointestinal distress, food allergies, malabsorption issues and implement strategies to improve the digestive process.



Type 1



Type 2



Type 3



Type 4



Type 5



Type 6



Type 7



POO AND YOU – WHICH ONE?

Separate hard lumps, like nuts. Hard to pass.

Sausage-shaped, but lumpy.

Sausage-shaped, but with cracks on the surface.

Sausage or snake-like, and smooth and soft.

Soft blobs with clear-cut edges.

Fluffy pieces with ragged edges. A mushy stool.

Watery and entirely liquid. No solid pieces.

Types 1-2: Can indicate constipation.

Types 3-4: Ideal and nearing perfection.

Types 5-7: Possible inflammation.

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FAQ ON THE POO!

How often should I be going number 2?

Are you going too much or too little? Healthy bowel habits can vary greatly from person to person depending on the state of health – especially digestion – diet, lifestyle, and stress. When it comes to frequency, a good rule of bum (pun intended) is 1-3 times a day. Any more than that may be a sign of something abnormal like a food allergy or sensitivity, a virus or bacteria, or gastritis. Less than 3 times a day may be considered constipation, and less than once a day may be a red flag for issues. Pay attention to what seems consistent for you. As long as it is not accompanied by abdominal pain and distention, gas, bloating, or other signs of digestive upset, odds are that this is what is normal for you!

What does the colour of my poop mean?

“Red flags down if it’s brown.” When you notice an unusual colour to your stool, consider it your body’s way of sending a signal to pay attention. The colour of your stool is a combination of bilirubin – which gives your stool a lovely shade of brown – what you eat, and bile. Any shade of brown is A-OK, but if you notice any change in colour, it’s important to take note. While it’s likely that a colour change is nothing serious, if you notice a consistent change, take note, and check in with your doctor.

Should poop sink or swim?

“Bottom of the bowl, you’re on a roll!” A floating stool can be a sign of digestive woes. A stool that floats often contains gas from poorly digested foods, intolerances or pathogens. Fat malabsorption, in particular, is a popular cause, especially when combined with a colour change, a foul odor, and the appearance of a “sticky” or greasy stool.

Does everyone’s poop stink?

Poo-Pourri anyone? Even a healthy, well-formed, consistent stool will have a smell. The smell is based on diet and the makeup of bacteria in the intestinal tract. While it may not be a scent you want to leave behind, odour is normal. A foul smell, however, can indicate an imbalance in the system. Undigested food can putrefy and ferment in the gut causing a “rotting” odour. A bad odour can be the sign of a food allergy, inflammation, or bacterial infection. Certain medications can also be culprits. If you are noticing a consistent change in odour, accompanied by symptoms like diarrhea or runny stool, abdominal pain, blood or mucous, make an appointment with your physician for further investigation.



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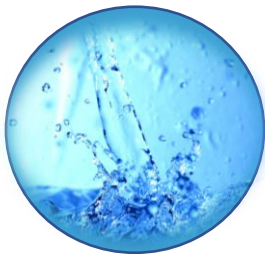
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FIND YOUR SUPER POOPER POWERS



FIBRE can be a solution to constipation, diarrhea, bloating and more! Focus on foods that are a blend of both insoluble and soluble fibre. Insoluble fibre, like bran and vegetable fibre, acts like a gentle brush sweeping debris through the large intestine. Soluble fibre, high in flax and chia seeds, binds to water and forms a gel that helps to move debris through the colon for elimination. Fibre promotes regularity and a healthy environment for good bacteria to flourish!



WATER is one of the most efficient and least invasive ways of flushing out the colon. Drink more! It helps to move food through your digestive tract, keeps the colon lining and muscles smooth and flexible, and hydrates the stool to promote easy and healthy bowel movements.



PROBIOTICS are food for the gut. Like a plant requires fertilizer to remain balanced in its environment, your digestive system requires good bacteria to do the same. Probiotics enhance every facet of your bowel health. They can be found in fermented foods and beverages like yogurt, sauerkraut, kombucha and kefir, and in supplement form.



EXERCISE is essential for healthy bowel movements and lowers your risk of colon cancer! Exercise helps to increase blood flow and circulation, reduces inflammation, and keeps the bowels regular reducing the toxic load in the colon. 30 to 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity is recommended. Anything works! Do something you love and rotate your exercises.

Sources: <https://bristolstoolchart.net/>
<https://www.healthline.com/health/how-many-times-should-you-poop-a-day>
<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/320938.php>
<https://stopcoloncancer.com/colon-cancer-prevention/prevention/exercise>