

Health Reflections



Constipation

Over the years I've had several people whisper to me, "Do you have a remedy for constipation?" As always as a homeopath, the response has to be that it depends on who needs the answer!

It's not that we're ungenerous or selective about who we want to help – it's simply a matter of needing a totality of individual clues before we're able to match them up with a 'wholistic' remedy. And even though a bout of constipation can feel overwhelmingly acute, it's rarely less than a chronic problem that demands a full consultation.

Children and Constipation The state of a child's gut microbes is paramount to health in general. It's also important to consider any traumas and tensions which could influence a child's inability to 'let go,' and to mention such experiences to the homeopath. Also helpful in remedy selection are details of the mother's digestive history and any drugs taken during pregnancy and early childhood.

Of the 500-600 homeopathic medicines listed under constipation, one of the commonest in paediatric care is Calc carb. Strangely these children tend to feel better in themselves when the colon is bunged up. When the stool is eventually passed it tends to be large and hard, progressing to sticky then liquid. In addition, a Calc carb type tends to have clammy hands and feet.

Those of a Nat mur disposition may consciously hold in a stool for fear of asking to use the toilet in school, or out of deep embarrassment about defecating in a public loo. You may notice a Nat-mur type craving salty snacks.



A child in need of homeopathic Silica is likely to experience a stool that starts to emerge but then slips back into the rectum. In homeopathic terms this is a 'bashful stool' but we mustn't laugh or shy away from each child's description of a bowel movement! A sluggish gut is a toxic place and deserves help.

In addition to homeopathic care, families can promote improved digestion by starting each day with a cup each of golden linseed tea. To prepare, put a tablespoonful of linseed in a flask, fill with hot water and leave overnight. In the morning, drink a cupful of the warm, thickened liquid. Be mindful of what the child then eats. Children's guts usually get along better with nutrient-dense breakfasts such as soft-boiled eggs, homemade cup-a-soups, stock and live kefir, rather than bread, cereals, jam and packaged fruit juice.

Adults and Constipation Many people make many lifestyle choices that are incompatible with good bowel health. In the acute phase, Nux vom is one possible homeopathic remedy for those who regularly overwork and take stimulants to keep going, leading to constriction in the rectum. After shocking ordeals that slow down bowel action, such as accidents and anaesthetics, homeopathic Opium can bring relief. Probiotic supplements can also help, but are best combined with a clear understanding of the causes of gut dysbiosis and a commitment to constitutional care.

It must be repeated that constipation is rarely a treat-at-home condition. Where drugs like antibiotics have been taken (perhaps without knowing about their effects on gut health) the constitutional prescription may be supplemented by support remedies aimed at rebalancing the microbiome, and may involve conversations about more sustainable future choices regarding diet and lifestyle.

THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK ♥ READ BEFORE YOU THINK*

Children and Constipation: Natalie Weekes (www.thebristolhomeopath.com, 2020);

Homeopathy for Mother and Baby: Miranda Castro (Papermac, 1993);

A Case of Chronic Childhood Constipation Resolved by Nat mur 30c: Tanya Artus (www.inspiringhealth.co.uk, 2019);

Evidence Based Homeopathic Family Medicine: Dana Ullman (Homeopathic Educational Services, 2020);

Gut and Psychology Syndrome: Natasha Campbell-McBride (Medinform, 2018).

*Fran Lebowitz - Social Studies

Regularity Reigns!

Practical Hints

👤 Get a Squatty Potty or sturdy box for resting feet whilst defecating. To understand why, watch 'This Unicorn Changed the Way I Poop' on youtube.

👤 Drink enough plain water and kvass, cook meals in homemade stock and if possible, move your body daily.

👤 For GAPSters, consider starting with or switching to Full GAPS rather than GAPS Intro, and try supplementing your meals with seaweed or spirulina.

👤 Cut down or cut out processed carbohydrates, in conjunction with addressing any blood sugar issues, low thyroid or any other endocrine problem you may have. In such cases, see if you can integrate holistic treatment from a professional acupuncturist or homeopath.

👤 For those already on GAPS, up your intake of top quality animal fats, and if fat assimilation is difficult seek advice on supporting liver function and bile. In the meantime, oxbile and fresh beets may help move things along, but ask your practitioner for individualised advice!

👤 Some adults find plain warm water enemas to be beneficial on their journey to resolving the cause of chronic constipation, but do your own reading and individual research first.

👤 For children, castor oil packs can bring relief: massage the oil onto the abdomen at night, cover with a towel and offer a hot water bottle to hold as they go to sleep.

Constipation after Childbirth

Homeopath Miranda Castro says that "Constipation after childbirth is an occupational hazard. The vagina and perineum may be sore and swollen for several days, in spite of taking *Arnica*. You cannot imagine that you will ever go to the loo again because everything feels numb or painful or both. And to top it all you may have piles and / or stitches as well."

In this situation, ask your homeopath for both internal and external Calendula, drink plenty of stock with added creamy kefir and try holding a pad against any stitches to make passing a stool less painful.

Some gentle yoga postures may also help.

G.A.P.S.™ Milkshake

A G.A.P.S.™ Milkshake has three main constituents – freshly pressed juice, friendly fats and whole eggs. In conjunction with the GAPS Diet, it's designed to improve bile flow and facilitate easy bowel movements without the potential side-effects sometimes associated with conventional laxatives.



This drink must be tailored to each individual's needs, so work with your practitioner if the general formula below does not offer enough guidance. Don't use ingredients that you cannot yet tolerate or truly don't like (and remember that it doesn't need to contain dairy!) Instead, use any GAPS friendly ingredients to create a milkshake that's palatable for yourself whilst you work on resolving the root cause of your constipation.

If diarrhoea is your problem, or if pregnant, breastfeeding, frail, allergic or otherwise unwilling to consume raw eggs, ask your practitioner for an alternative recipe.

General Formula for a G.A.P.S.™ Milkshake :

Juice: Roughly a third of a glass of juice, freshly pressed (not store bought juice). Consider using an organic apple, organic celery stick and organic carrots. Beetroot juice could contribute additional therapeutic value; mint and lemon could lend a refreshing taste; berries added sweetness.

Fats: Any single or combination of friendly fats, totalling 5 tablespoons. These can include coconut cream, coconut oil, higher-fat homemade kefir or homemade sour cream, organic ghee and a portion of avocado (avocado can be chopped and frozen for effective storage of small portions).

Eggs: 1-2 super fresh eggs from impeccably healthy hens.

Raw honey: Enough to sweeten, if needed.

Method: Run your fruit and veg through a juicer no longer than 20 minutes before consumption. Add to the rest of the ingredients and combine well. Drink before breakfast or as your GAPS practitioner advises.

Each Health Reflections article and blog has been written for those who wish to learn about the true meaning of health, who desire to think broadly and who are ready to take responsibility for their own personal choices. All information shared is of educational nature and should not replace medical advice. No guarantees are made regarding accuracy or completeness of content, or its applicability to any condition or personal circumstance. If you choose to implement any of the ideas or principles described, you are taking full responsibility for your actions. In times of illness, seek professional healthcare.

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