

CONSTIPATION
Level I
 (If subjective data sufficient, no exam is necessary.)

Skill Level: RN

Definition: Decrease in frequency and/or passage of hard, dry feces.

MILD	
<p>Subjective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May complain of increased hardness of stools, difficulty in passing stools, or decreased frequency of bowel movements. • "I'm constipated." • Abdominal distention may or may not be a complaint. 	<p>Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alteration in Bowel Elimination: Constipation
<p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subjective data sufficient for institution of treatment plan. 	<p>Plan: Patient educations and self-care items for this protocol include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural dietary fiber like Metamucil. <p>At nursing discretion may use any of the below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruct patient to increase fluid intake to at least 12 glasses of water per day. • Exercise in form of walking approximately one mile per day. • Increase intake of food high in fiber such as fruits, vegetables, and bran cereal. • Milk of Magnesia 15-30 cc BID x 2 days. • Return to clinic if constipation continues. • Refer to practitioner if more than three incidences in one month noted.

Nursing Education:

New onset constipation problems in patients over age 50 may be indicative of lower colon obstruction by a mass or tumor.

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APPROVED:

Medical Services Manager

Date

Chief Medical Officer

Date



Medical Director

5/5/09
Date

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