



## How To Relieve Constipation

Constipation is a common side effect of pregnancy and birth—just another result of the intense hormone shifts experienced during this time. It is most commonly experienced in the first trimester and following birth, no matter whether you had a vaginal delivery or a c-section. Luckily, there are quite a few things you can do to either prevent constipation before it strikes or to relieve it when it happens.

### **FIBER, FIBER, FIBER**

Up the fiber intake to keep things moving

- Vegetables are great sources of fiber, but fruit, avocado, nuts, seeds, legumes, and whole grains will also contribute.
- Prunes are a great source of fiber, but be mindful of the quantity consumed as they are also naturally very high in sugar.
- Tip: Try adding nuts and seeds to smoothies, yogurt, oatmeal, or salads to add in extra fiber and other micronutrients. Those highest in fiber are chia, flax, pumpkin, sesame, sunflower, almonds, pine nuts, and pistachios.

### **HYDRATE!**

- Aim for 2.5-3L (10-12 cups) water/day on top of eating hydrating foods like vegetables and fruits.

### **MOVE...SAFELY**

- Daily movement like walking, yoga, and pregnancy-safe exercise will keep your digestion humming along for increased comfort.

### **CONSIDER A BATH**

- Warm (not hot) water baths, with 2 cups Epsom salt, are as relaxing as they are therapeutic.
- Magnesium is well absorbed through skin and can help w/ constipation, nausea, and sleep. You can also make a “foot bath” if you’re not interested in a full bath.

### **RETHINK YOUR PRENATAL VITAMIN**

- Review your prenatal multivitamin with your healthcare professional or nutritionist. Some contain a form of iron that can contribute to constipation, so it may be helpful to switch brands for more relief.

This guide was created in collaboration with perinatal nutritionist Janine Higbie, MS, CNS for Expectful, Inc.