

## WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO TO LOOK AFTER YOURSELF?

### GET A GP

The most important first step in managing your physical health is to make sure you have a GP you can trust. Ask around among people you know and make an appointment for a check-up.

### QUIT SMOKING

- Smoking damages every organ in your body
- Smoking can cause *tooth, mouth and gum disease*
- Think of all the money you would save!
- If you've thought of quitting smoking (or even just cutting down) talk to your doctor, case manager or phone **Quitline 137848 (13 QUIT)**

### BE MORE ACTIVE

- Aim to be physically active for at least 30 minutes every day
- You should be puffing a bit and break a sweat, but still able to talk
- Walking is a great way to start
- You will feel happier and loose weight
- It will help with cholesterol, blood pressure and diabetes

### LOOK AFTER YOUR TEETH

- Brush your teeth twice a day
- Aim to floss once a week
- See your dentist once a year
- Tooth decay can make you sick

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

- Choose low fat and sugar free products
- Wholegrain breads and cereals
- Eat lots of fruit and vegetables
- Drink plenty of water
- Trim the fat off meat and skin off chicken
- Cut down fried and takeaway foods
- Avoid cakes, chocolate and lollies
- Limit alcohol



# CONSTIPATION

ccCHiP

Information Booklet

ccCHiP

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Collaborative Centre for  
**Cardiometabolic Health**  
in Psychosis



# Constipation

Almost everyone gets constipated at some time during his or her life. Constipation is a change in your normal bowel movements, going less frequently than you usually do, passing hard, dry faeces/stools (poo); or straining when you go to the toilet. Constipation can be acute (coming on suddenly but infrequently) or chronic (long lasting). Most people have constipation at some point. Often dietary changes can relieve the problem.

Constipation occurs when bowel movements become difficult or less frequent. The normal length of time between bowel movements ranges widely from person to person. Some people have bowel movements three times a day; others, only one or two times a week. Going longer than three days without a bowel movement is too long. After three days, faeces become harder and more difficult to pass.

Constipation may affect your mental and physical health.

## YOU ARE CONSIDERED CONSTIPATED IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING

- Fewer than three bowel movements a week
- Sudden decrease in the number of bowel movements
- Stools harder than usual
- Bowel still feels full after bowel movement
- Feeling bloated
- Straining during bowel movements

## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF CONSTIPATION?

### Symptoms of constipation can include:

- Infrequent bowel movements and/or difficulty having bowel movements
- Swollen abdomen or abdominal pain
- Pain
- Vomiting

## WHAT CAN I DO IF I GET CONSTIPATED:

- Drink more water – try having a glass with meals and morning and afternoon tea
- Have more fiber in your diet such as cereals, fruit and veg
- Increase your exercise - it is really important to keep our body moving
- Try not to put off going to the toilet – when you have to go – YOU HAVE TO GO!
- Your doctor may have some other alternatives.

## MEDICATION

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