



## POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS: CONSTIPATION INFORMATION SHEET

Constipation is common after surgery. This is due to numerous reasons, including dehydration, decreased activity, pain medications, and just the anesthesia itself. Many people will require medications, in addition to staying hydrated post-operatively, to continue their normal bowel habits. Thankfully, all the medications that we use for constipation are available over the counter. Below, we outline those medications in a step-wise fashion.

### First-line medications:

These are useful for prevention. Can start right after surgery.

- Colace 250mg twice a day
- Senna 8.6mg twice a day

### Second-line medications:

Useful if you haven't had a bowel movement for 2-3 days after surgery.

- Milk of magnesia: use as directed on bottle
- MiraLAX: 17g up to three times a day
- Dulcolax (Bisacodyl): 1-2 5mg tablets prior to bedtime

### Third-line medications:

More potent medications that can be used 5 days after surgery.

- Magnesium citrate: follow instructions on bottle
- Fleet enema: used from the bottom, follow instructions on bottle

If you require second- or third-line medications to start going after surgery, you should still continue the first-line medications afterwards to make sure you continue to go regularly. Once you are back to your regular schedule, are having loose stools, or going too often, you can wean off all the medications.

**CALL OUR OFFICE if you get a fever of over 100°F or if your incision becomes red or hot to the touch.**