Cincinnati Children's

Colorectal Center

General Rules for the Administration of Laxatives

The Colorectal Center at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center recommends following these rules in order to become an expert in the management of your daughter's / son's constipation.

1. The child must empty her or his colon every day.
2. You do not want to treat constipation. Ideally, you want to prevent constipation.
3. Do not hesitate to give laxatives to provoke the bowel movement.
4. The amount of laxative must be determined by you using the trial and error method. The goal is to have the child produce soft stool. You do not want hard stool. You do not want diarrhea.
5. How do you know that your child emptied the rectum? You must look at the amount of stool that your child has passed. If you are not sure that represents the full contents of the child's rectum, you can do a rectal exam. If you are still not sure, you can have an X-ray taken of the abdomen and send it to the Colorectal Center at Cincinnati Children's.
6. If one entire day goes by and your child did not have a bowel movement, it means that you did not give your child enough laxative food and enough laxative medication the previous day. Under those circumstances, you must give an enema to remove the stool from the rectum, but more importantly, you must increase the amount of laxatives.

Find further information about the Bowel Management Program.

Contact the Colorectal Center at Cincinnati Children's

If you have any questions about the Colorectal Center at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, please contact us.