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**What goes in, must come out!**

If you've gotten to know your Naturopathic Doctor, you will know that at the root of it, NDs are really poo doctors! We like to know what your stool looks like, if it is easy to pass, if it is formed, if you have gas. That is because we know that the health of your stool is a good indicator of your general health. Our bowels are our most effective and efficient mode of transporting toxins made or processed in our body to the outside. If stool sits too long in our bowels it becomes dehydrated and more difficult to pass, it can allow for toxins to be reabsorbed into our bloodstream, and it can cause gas by allowing the bacteria to ferment and putrefy the contents.

**Have you ever wondered how many times a day you should have a bowel movement?**

Ask yourself, how many times a day do I eat meals? The answer to that question should be – more than once. So ideally you should be having 3 complete bowel movements spaced throughout the day. In reality, most adults don't give themselves enough time to go three times daily because they are busy. Everyone should have at least one bowel movement daily. Bowel movements should feel complete, not like you've got stool left inside. We have dedicated this newsletter to the topic of poo! Check out the Bristol stool chart to learn how to analyze your stools. Read about prebiotics and probiotics, and herbs for healthy bowel function, and learn about parasites.

**How to Analyze your Stool**

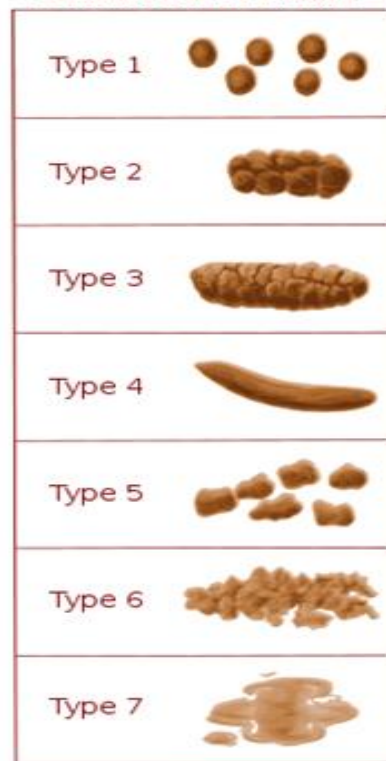
- **Type 1:** Stools appear in separate, hard lumps, similar to nuts. Type 1 stools remain in the colon the longest amount of time; a sure sign you're constipated.
- **Type 2:** Stools are sausage-like in appearance but lumpy. This indicates toxic constipation and need for intestinal cleansing.
- **Type 3: Normal:** Stools come out similar to a sausage with cracks on the surface. They are formed and the length of your wrist to elbow.
- **Type 4: Normal:** Stools are smooth and soft in the form of a sausage or snake.
- **Type 5:** Stools form soft blobs with clear-cut edges, and easily pass through digestive system. Soft diarrhea, it may indicate a possible risk of bowel disease.
- **Type 6:** Stools have fluffy pieces with ragged edges. Considered mushy stools, they indicate diarrhea.
- **Type 7:** Stool is mostly liquid with no solid pieces. Passed quickly through colon; is indicative of severe diarrhea, possibly as a result of a viral or bacterial infection. See a doctor as soon as possible.



**Test for Bowel Transit Time**

How long does it take for the food you eat to pass through your system? One way to know is by trying the *beet test*. Eat approximately 3 medium sized red beets – peeled and steamed until tender - the colour should be gone from your stool within 24 hours. Be prepared to see the red color of the beets in your urine before you see the red in your bowel movement.

**Bristol Stool Chart**



**Probiotics**

Probiotics are the microorganisms found in the human gut. Probiotics, also called "friendly bacteria" or "good bacteria," help to maintain the natural balance of organisms in the intestines. They reduce the growth of harmful bacteria and promote a healthy digestive system and are therefore vital to the digestion and absorption of food and nutrients. Probiotics are available in the form of dietary supplements and food sources, such as yoghurt, kefir, miso, and sauerkraut.

**Clinic News**

Welcome to Lisa Tabrizi our clinic's newest Naturopath. Lisa will be seeing patients Tuesdays and Fridays, under Dr. Grant's supervision until her licensing is official in August.

Lori Goldblatt is available for Reiki and Hot stone relaxation treatments  
Wednesdays 5pm-8pm  
Fridays 9:30-11:30am

Sylvie Hebert is available for CranioSacral therapy Tuesdays from 11am-5pm.

Summer Workshop:

4-Part Meditation Workshop  
with Lori Goldblatt – beginning June 22<sup>nd</sup>  
Limited availability – contact the office for more details or to register



**Prebiotics**

Prebiotics nourish the growth of friendly bacteria in our digestive systems, it includes things like amino acids – such as L-glutamine, naturally occurring sugars – such as Fructo-Oligo Saccharide, and most importantly, fibre.

What fibre is right for you? Most people think right away of wheat bran (e.g. All-Bran Buds, Fibre 1 bars, etc) however, wheat bran can be harsh on the intestines and is difficult to digest. Rice or oat bran may be more appropriate for some people.

Degree of processing can change the effect of fibre, for example, powdered psyllium will be more helpful for people experiencing diarrhea because it slows down bowel transit time, while coarser psyllium husk will help increase transit time in constipation.

Here are some other fibre options:

**Bran:**

**Rice** – 12g per 1/4 c

**Oat** – 15g per 1/4 c

**Wheat** – 25g per 1/4 c

**Psyllium** – 4.5g per 1 tbsp

**Flax** (ground) – 2g per 1 tbsp

**Fruit/Vegetables:**

**Apple:** 4g per 1 medium

**Pear:** 6g per 1 medium

**Blueberries:** 4g per 1 cup

**Pumpkin:** 3g per 1 cup cooked, mashed

**Avocado:** 3g per ¼ fruit

**Broccoli:** 6g per ½ cup, cooked



**Herbs for Digestion**

**Dandelion Root** - *Taraxacum officinalis* helps in upper digestive function by improving bile production of the liver.

**Gentian** – *Gentiana lutea* was traditionally used as a bitter. Gentian increases saliva formation, stomach acid production, pancreatic secretion of digestive enzymes and liver production and secretion of bile.

**Aloe juice** – *Aloe barbadensis* is used for its short-term laxative effect. When constipation is caused by the failure of the colon muscles to respond to the normal stimuli for evacuation, Aloe works by increasing the bowel activity.

**Laxative herbs** - There are many other stronger laxative herbs, which are safe for short-term use under the supervision of a Naturopathic doctor.

**Parasites**

Parasites are an often overlooked cause of gastrointestinal symptoms in patients in Canada, despite the fact that there are several commonly acquired parasites here. Symptoms associated with parasitic infections can include, but are not limited to: diarrhea sometimes associated with fever, vague or significant abdominal pain, vomiting, and weight loss. These symptoms can be particularly significant in immune compromised people. Symptoms may be acute, but if overlooked and left untreated can persist for months or years. Natural therapies can be very effective in killing and eliminating parasites. Standard stool analysis does not always pick up parasites, so ask your ND about more comprehensive testing, especially if you experience symptoms or have been travelling recently.

**Foods for Digestion**

Fibre isn't what everyone needs for healthy bowel movements; some people need more water or fluids, while others need more protein or even just a greater food volume.

**Garlic** – anti-parasitic and anti-bacterial

**Ginger** – warms the stomach aiding in upper digestive function, reduces nausea.

**Dark green leafy vegetables** – rich in magnesium, which helps to relax the muscles of the bowel and aid bowel movements.

**Bitter greens** – stimulate the brain to increase upper digestive function – saliva in the mouth, acid in the stomach, enzymes from the pancreas, and bile from the liver and gallbladder.

**Liquidy foods** – soups, stews, smoothies, and herbal teas all help to add moisture to the entire digestive tract from the mouth to the rectum.

**BRAT** = bananas, rice, apples, toast. These foods are helpful in cases of short-term diarrhea.

**Precautions**

*If you experience prolonged or chronic constipation or diarrhea, or suffer from inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), diverticulosis or diverticulitis, or bowel cancer, guidance through the appropriate treatment plan for your individual situation will be needed from your Naturopathic doctor.*

Naturopathic Perspectives

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