

WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER? BOWEL HEALTH GUIDE

HOW IS YOUR BOWEL HEALTH?

Find out what your number is on the bowel chart and find a range of tips and support. This guide covers all ages and life stages, from babies and children to the golden years.



Please share it with anyone who may benefit!

INCLUDES OUR HELPFUL BOWEL CHART!

ALSO INSIDE: RESOURCES, VIDEOS, TIPS AND ACTIVITY SHEETS TO HELP SUPPORT YOU IN YOUR BOWEL HEALTH.



FROM BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD



TO ADULTHOOD



AND THE GOLDEN YEARS

CONTENTS

Click on the topics below to go straight to the most helpful pages for you.



HELPFUL
BOWEL CHART



PREGNANCY AND BIRTH



CHILDHOOD



ADULTHOOD



THE GOLDEN YEARS



FOR CARERS

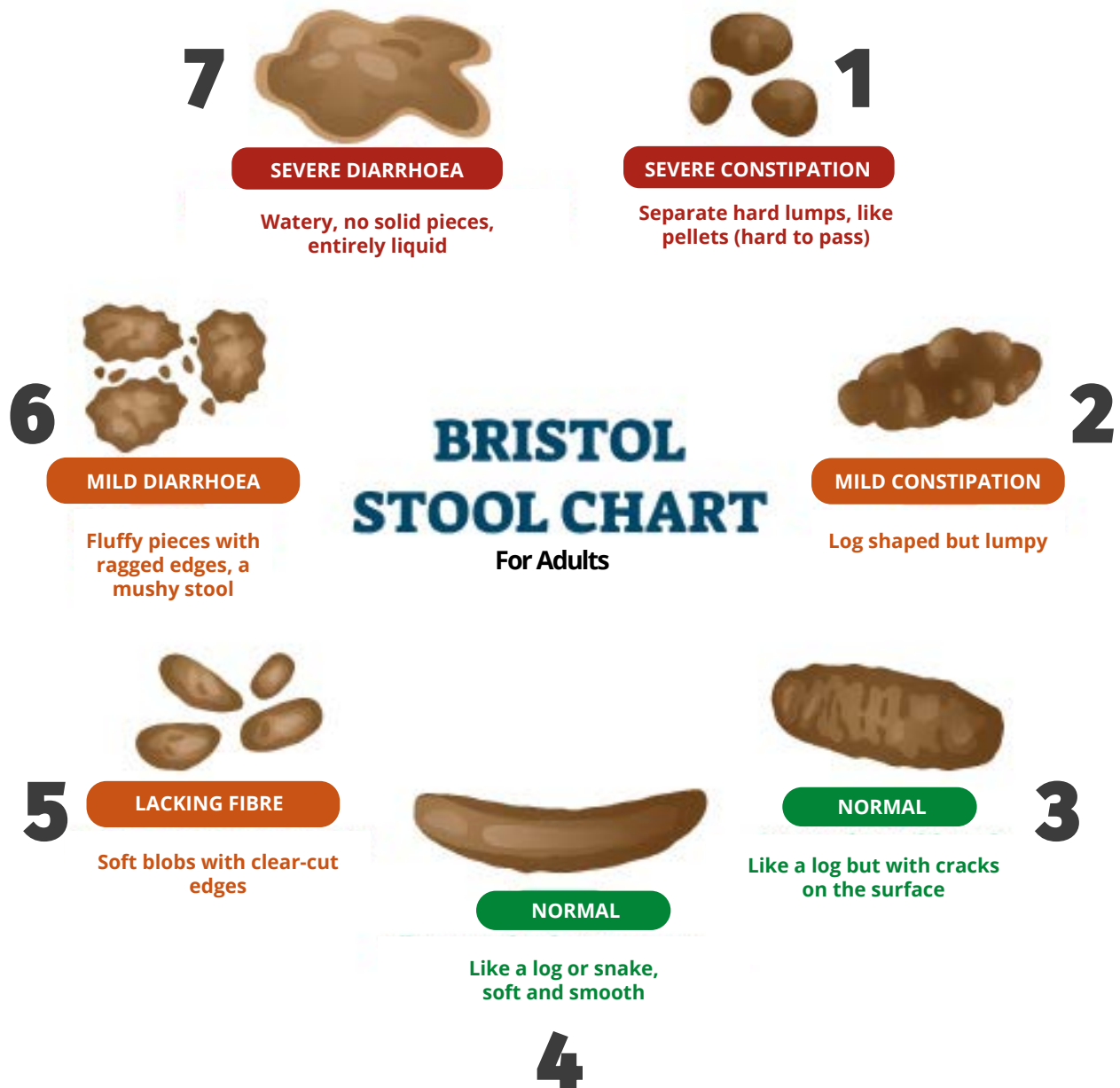
What's Your Number?

See if your bowel is healthy by checking the chart.

Adults should aim for #3 or #4.



Click for a downloadable chart



If you are not seeing 3 or 4 when you flush, give us a call and we can talk about your bowel health.

continence **NZ**
0800 650 659

Top 5 Tips for Healthy Bowels

World Continence Week

19-25
June 2023



Fluid and Food:

Get enough in to help it come out – aim for 1.5-2L of water and 25-34 grams of fibre daily for an adult.



Physical Activity:

Move your body to help move your bowels. 20-30 minutes of activity at least 3-4 times weekly is ideal.



Timing:

Relax and take your time on the toilet – allow about 10 minutes after breakfast and dinner, or whenever you feel the urge to go.



Position:

Sit on the toilet with your feet flat, knees at slightly above your hips, and leaning forward slightly.



Know your Pattern:

Be familiar with your bowel pattern and what is "normal" so that you know when to seek help.

Visit www.continence.org.nz to find out more about keeping your bowel healthy!

PREGNANCY AND BIRTH

Leaking/incontinence while pregnant or after having a baby is common, but not normal. If you are leaking it is a sign that you need to see a health professional for support. Pelvic health physios and continence nurses are trained in how to best support you.

WATCH EMMA'S STORY

See how life-changing the right help can be



DOWNLOAD PELVIC FLOOR GUIDE

From pelvic health physio Liz Childs



READ OUR ONLINE GUIDES

Visit the info for mums section of our site



Top pregnancy and birth tips

- 1 Do pelvic floor exercises every day, for life. See our guides above.
- 2 Drink plenty of water (6 to 8 cupfuls a day) and eat foods with plenty of fibre to avoid constipation.
- 3 See a pelvic health physio or continence nurse if you are concerned.
- 4 Don't put off getting help. We can help you get the support you need. Call us on 0800 650 659.

Questions? Don't hesitate to contact our friendly team!
Call us on 0800 650 659.

CHILDHOOD

Toilet training is a huge milestone that can take a lot of patience. And even then, many things can impact a child's continence as they get older. One in 12 children and teenagers have a bowel and bladder issue.

WATCH FUN VIDEOS

Find some great videos for watching with little ones

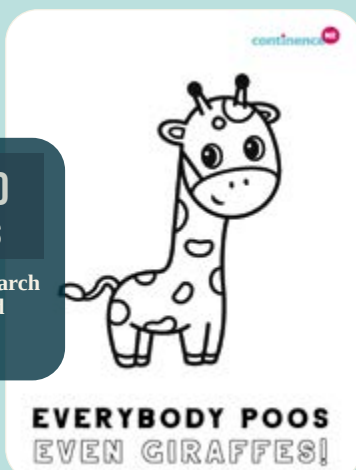


WATCH POO HOO

Tim's story is great to discuss

DOWNLOAD ACTIVITY SHEETS

Try our word search and healthy food colouring sheet



WATCH TOP TIPS SERIES

Help wake up Mr Poo!



Top tips for children

- 1 Incontinence is not a child's fault and they are not just being naughty.
- 2 Children should be encouraged to drink plenty of water during the day, and eat a balanced diet.
- 3 Parents should seek help from a family doctor if their child is wetting during the day from age 5+, is still wetting the bed at 7+, or has been dry at night for 6-12 months and then starts to wet the bed again.
- 4 There is no time limit or magic formula for toilet training. Stay positive, and do it in each child's time.

[You can also sign up for our Toilet Tactics for Tamariki webinar series](#)

ADULTHOOD

There is plenty you can do to keep your bowel in good working order. It can be as simple as drinking plenty of water or sitting properly on the toilet. It is also important to know when you need professional help.



WATCH FAQ VIDEOS

Find answers to some of the most common questions we receive



DOWNLOAD BOWEL REVIVER

A recipe to help get things moving

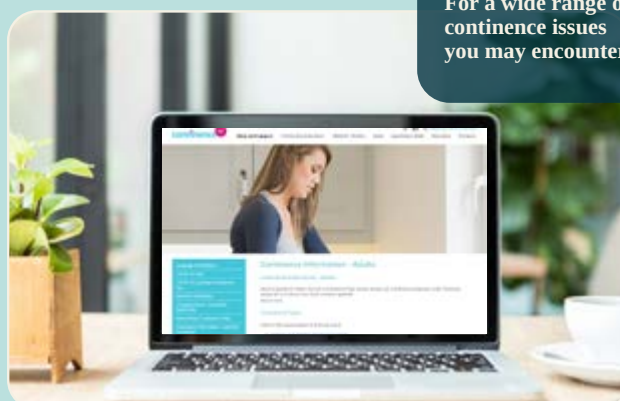
READ OUR ONLINE GUIDES

For a wide range of continence issues you may encounter



DOWNLOAD OUR HELPFUL CHART

Which tells you what is healthy and unhealthy



Top tips for adults

- 1 Make sure you are drinking enough water and eating the right foods for healthy bowels. Adults should aim for 1.5-2L of water and 25-34 grams of fibre daily.
- 2 Movement and exercise both on and off the toilet help stimulate the bowels and keep them moving as they should. Aim for 20-30 minutes of activity at least 3-4 times weekly.
- 3 Know your bowel pattern and type and be familiar with what is healthy and unhealthy so that you know when to seek help from your GP or other medical professional.

Questions? Don't hesitate to contact our friendly team!
Call us on 0800 650 659.

THE GOLDEN YEARS

Bowel and bladder control problems are more common in older people. But even though these issues are more prevalent as you get older, there is plenty that you can do to improve your continence.

WATCH FAQ VIDEO

Find out how to sit on the toilet to help ease constipation



DOWNLOAD OUR GUIDE

To products and skincare



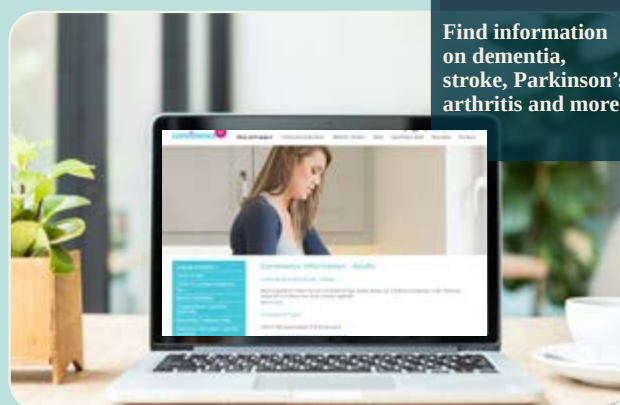
DOWNLOAD OUR FREE GUIDES

Fibre and fluid for a healthy bowel



READ OUR ONLINE GUIDES

Find information on dementia, stroke, Parkinson's, arthritis and more



Top tips for the golden years



- 1 Fibre intake is important as you get older. Get enough in to help it come out – aim for 1.5-2L of water and 25-34 grams of fibre daily.
- 2 Move your body to help move your bowels: 20-30 minutes of activity at least 3-4 times weekly is ideal.
- 3 If you have mobility issues, toilet steps and frames can make getting on the toilet easier.
- 4 Increased joint stiffness and muscle weakness/rigidity as you age can make it difficult to remove clothing to use the toilet. Wear clothes that are easy to manage, for example, pants with elastic waists.

Questions? Don't hesitate to contact our friendly team!
Call us on 0800 650 659.

CARERS

It's important to get the right help and support when caring for someone with bladder and bowel challenges. And to make sure you get time out for yourself.

WATCH CARER QUESTIONS

With continence nurse Janet Thackray



READ OUR CARING GUIDE

Info on caring for someone with incontinence

DOWNLOAD FREE RESOURCE

A helpful bowel and bladder diary



Top tips for carers!

- 1 Options for preventing, treating, managing and curing incontinence are available, so it is very important to seek professional help as early as possible.
- 2 Call us for advice if you need help. See your GP if required. They can refer you to a continence advisor to help with practical advice and management options.
- 3 Make sure the person you are caring for is drinking adequate amounts of fluid. They need 6-8 cupfuls spread evenly throughout the day.
- 4 This is hard work. Take time out for yourself when you can. And call us if you need support or advice.

Questions? Don't hesitate to contact our friendly team!
Call us on 0800 650 659.

TRANSLATED GUIDES



Our most popular bowel and bladder guides are also available in the following languages:

Te Reo Māori

Chinese

Hindi

Tongan

Samoan