
What is a bowel program?

A bowel program is a way to help your child have regular bowel movements and avoid accidents. Before starting a bowel program, check with your child's doctor to see what is best for your child.

How can I help with my child's bowel program?

Here are some tips to help with your child's bowel program:

- Give your child high-fiber foods, such as:
 - Bran cereal
 - Green vegetables
 - Cornbread
 - Apples or apple juice
 - Prunes or prune juice
 - Raisins or grapes (if your child is old enough to swallow them without choking)
- Give your child plenty of fluids each day.
- Your child's doctor may advise a stool softener (such as Colace) or extra fiber (such as Metamucil or Citrucel).
- Keep your child active to help make bowel movements easier.
- Stick with the same bowel program routine the best you can to help retrain your child's bowels.

How should my child sit for a bowel movement?

- Have your child lean forward a bit and bear down gently with feet supported. Young children can blow bubbles or blow into a toy while they push.
- Have your child sit for their bowel movement at the same time each day. A good time to try is 30 minutes after a meal in the evening. This allows you to work the program into your night routine when you may have more time.
- Avoid using bedpans if you can. Talk with the nurse and occupational therapist to see if your child needs a toileting seat called an ActiveAide.
- If your child does not have a bowel movement for 2 or 3 days, use a suppository or digital stimulation if advised by their doctor.

What is a suppository?

A suppository is medicine that is inserted into the rectum (bottom). Talk with the doctor before giving your child a suppository.

- As the suppository slowly melts, it softens the stool around it. This makes it easier to have a bowel movement.
- It also helps the bowels work to remove waste.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

Bowel program, continued

- Keep suppositories in the refrigerator so they do not melt. Bring them to room temperature before using with your child.

What supplies do I need?

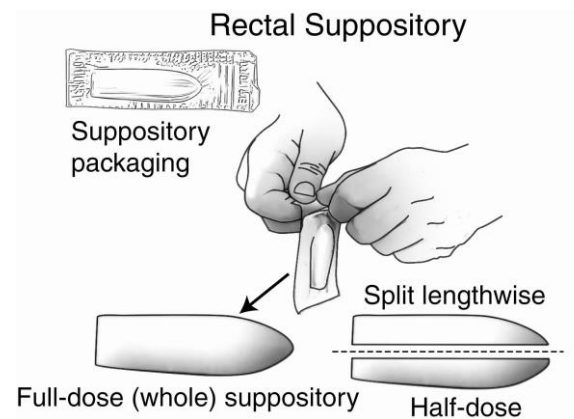
Gather these supplies:

- Suppository
- Disposable glove or finger cot
- Wash cloth or paper towels
- Water-soluble jelly (such as KY Jelly)
- Toilet paper
- Soap and water

How do I give the suppository?

Get ready

- Make sure your nails are short. This is so you do not scratch your child's soft rectal tissue.
- Wash your hands well with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Put on a disposable glove or finger cot.
- Remove the wrapper from the suppository.
- If the suppository needs to be split for the right dose, cut it in half from top to bottom.
- Place warm water or water-soluble jelly on the suppository. This makes it easier to insert. Do not use petroleum jelly, such as Vaseline. It may keep the suppository from working.



Get your child in position

Position your child so you can see their buttocks (backside).

- Have your **baby or toddler** lie on their tummy with their knees bent under their tummy. Or you can place them on their tummy across your lap.
- Have your **child** lie on their left side with their legs bent.
- Let **teens** give the suppository to themselves if they want to. They can choose to lie in bed or sit on an ActiveAide if needed.

Give the suppository

- Gently remove extra stool with your finger if needed.

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Bowel program, continued

- Hold the suppository between your thumb and pointer finger. With your other hand, gently spread the buttocks until you can see the opening to the rectum (called the anus).
- Gently insert the suppository into your child's rectum - **tapered end first**. Make sure it goes past the anal sphincter (the muscle inside the rectum) and rests against the rectal wall.
 - If your child is younger than 3 years old, use your little (pinky) finger to push the suppository in.
 - If your child is 3 years or older, use your pointer finger to push the suppository in.
- You may need to hold your child's buttocks closed for 5 to 10 minutes. This gives the suppository time to melt.
- Remove the glove or finger cot.
- Wash your hands well again.

After the suppository

- Wait 10 to 15 minutes. Have your child sit on the ActiveAide placed over the toilet and bear down gently until stool comes out.
- When your child is done, wash their skin well with soap and water.
- Praise your child for helping with their bowel program.

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

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