



## CONSTIPATION AFTER SURGERY

One of the most common side effects of surgery is constipation. To avoid constipation, follow the steps below. Our recommendations are listed in order of strength, so start with 1 and work your way down the list if needed. All medications listed are available over the counter.

### **1 WATER**

*Anesthesia or fluid loss during surgery may lead to dehydration and constipation. Please drink plenty of water to replenish your hydration. Water is best, but sports drinks with electrolytes and low sugar are good alternatives.*

### **2**

#### **COFFEE AND TEA**

*Caffeine is a stimulant that can help you go. It is ok to resume drinking your favorite caffeinated beverage the day after surgery.*

### **3**

#### **METAMUCIL, FIBERCON, CITRUCEL, OR BENEFIBER**

*These are bulk forming laxatives that make stool bigger and softer. It is important to take these with plenty of water. You may start this 1-2 days before surgery. Follow package instructions for dosage recommendations.*

### **4**

#### **COLACE (DOCUSATE)**

*This is a stool softener that makes stool easier to pass and prevents having to strain when having a bowel movement. You may start this 1-2 days before surgery. Follow package instructions for dosage recommendations.*

### **5**

#### **MILK OF MAGNESIA OR MIRALAX**

*These are osmotic laxatives that move fluid from your intestines into your stool and stimulate bowel movements. Follow package instructions for dosage recommendations.*

### **6**

#### **DULCOLAX (BISACODYL)**

*This is a stimulant laxative that stimulates the muscles in your intestines to push stool out. Follow package instructions for dosage recommendations.*

