

## Opening your bowels: the correct position

### Introduction

Normal bowel frequency differs from one individual to the next . It is considered to be within the normal range if it occurs up to three times a week or three times a day.

This leaflet is designed to teach you an easier method of opening your bowels which reduces the strain, but is still effective.

### Perineal pressure

To facilitate emptying your bowel, you may find it helpful to apply pressure externally over the perineum. For women: between the vagina and the back passage. For men: behind the scrotum and the back passage. You may also find it helpful to apply an upward pressure aside/adjacent to the back passage. To apply this pressure you may prefer to use a pad of toilet paper or wear a disposable glove .

Alternatively, some women prefer to apply pressure internally just inside the vagina. This can be done wearing a disposable glove and using either the pad of the thumb or the index finger. Pressure is applied upwards and backwards towards the bowel, in order to support the wall of the vagina and improve bowel emptying.

### Contact details

**Therapy Services Poole:** 0300 019 2121

**Therapy Services Christchurch:** 0300 019 4418

Poole Hospital, Longfleet Road, Poole, Dorset, BH15 2JB  
Christchurch Hospital, Fairmile Road, Christchurch, Dorset, BH23 2JX

Author: **Lisa Drury** Date: **Jan 2022** Version: **One** Review date: **Jan 2025** Ref: **013/22**

# Correct position for opening your bowels

## Step one



Knees higher than hips

## Step two



Lean forwards and put elbows on your knees

## Step three



Bulge out your abdomen  
Straighten your spine

## Correct position



Knees higher than hips  
Lean forwards and put elbows on your knees  
Bulge out your abdomen  
Straighten your spine