

Patient Information

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

Women's and Men's Physiotherapy Health Team
Tel: 01202 442506 (Monday-Friday 8am-4.00 pm)

For further general health-related information, please ask the relevant department for an Information Prescription or contact:

The Health Information Centre

Telephone: 01202 448003

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Date: February 2016
Review date: February 2019
Version number: 1
HOD: Sally Sheppard



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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