Laxative or High Fiber Diet

The following foods may produce a laxative effect:
- Spicy foods.
- High fat dairy products can cause a laxative effect for some, however may cause constipation for others.
- Trial these foods and if there is no benefit to bowel movements only provide enough dairy to meet calcium needs for age.
- Foods high in fat. Every person’s digestive tract is different. For some, fatty foods will cause bowel movements and the same food may cause constipate others.
- Dark Chocolate.
- Caffeine can cause anal sphincter to relax and produce a laxative effect.

Fiber
There are two kinds of fiber: water soluble and water insoluble.
- Foods high in fiber contain both.
- However, some foods contain more of one or the other.

Water Soluble Fiber
- Water soluble fiber prolongs stomach emptying time so that sugar is released and absorbed more slowly.
- It forms a gel when mixed with liquid which helps to soften and bulk the stool.
- If your child is taking laxatives, water soluble fiber should be included at mealtimes in addition to following an overall high fiber meal plan.

Foods High in Water Soluble Fiber
- Cornmeal
- Rutabagas
- Yams
- Orange
- Mango
- Oatmeal
- Barley
- Papayas
- Artichokes
- Winter Squash
- Tangerine
- Potato without skin
- Apples
- Beans
**Water Insoluble Fiber**

- Water insoluble fiber moves bulk through the intestines, promotes regular bowel movements, and helps prevent constipation.
- If your child is not on laxatives and is trying to avoid constipation encourage sources of insoluble fiber.

**Foods High In Water Insoluble Fiber**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cauliflower</th>
<th>Kidney Beans</th>
<th>Bulgur</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spinach, raw</td>
<td>Strawberries</td>
<td>Popcorn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green cabbage, raw</td>
<td>Blueberries</td>
<td>Corn Tortilla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kernel Corn</td>
<td>Cranberries</td>
<td>Whole Wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broccoli, raw</td>
<td>Cherries</td>
<td>Breads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots</td>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>Whole Wheat pasta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cucumbers</td>
<td>Prunes</td>
<td>Whole Wheat pita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomatoes</td>
<td>Prune Juice</td>
<td>Bran Cereals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Peas</td>
<td>Raisins</td>
<td>Raisin Bran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baked potato with skin</td>
<td>Pears</td>
<td>Bran Flakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Beans</td>
<td>Guava</td>
<td>Rye Bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Split Peas</td>
<td>Fresh pineapple</td>
<td>Almonds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chick Peas</td>
<td>Chunky Peanut Butter</td>
<td>Sesame Seeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lentils</td>
<td>Graham crackers</td>
<td>Brazil nuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Beans</td>
<td>Raspberries</td>
<td>Lima Beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackberries</td>
<td>Mushrooms</td>
<td>Parsnips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melons</td>
<td>Barley</td>
<td>Green/Red Sweet Peppers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiwi</td>
<td>Potatoes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**How much fiber is recommended for your child?**

- Initial suggestion: Age plus 10, example 4 years +10 - 14 grams a day.
- Once child is consuming 1500 calories, increase fiber to 25-30 grams a day.
- Cereals should have 3 grams of fiber or more per serving.

**Why is fluid important?**

- It is important to drink enough fluids while increasing fiber in the diet and once fiber intake goal is achieved.
- Consuming more fluids can help avoid constipation.
- The amount of fluid suggested for your child depends on child’s weight, type of foods eaten and activity level.
Examples of how to fit fiber into mealtimes

**Breakfast**
- Whole wheat waffles w/fresh fruit.
- Oatmeal.
- Frosted Mini Wheats.
- Kashi Mighty Bites.
- Raisin Bran.
- Wheat Chex.
- Cracklin Oat Bran.
- Whole wheat bagel or whole wheat English muffin with chunky peanut butter.
- Bran muffins.
- Add fruit to increase fiber content to any breakfast.

**Lunch and Dinner**
- Vegetables soup with whole wheat crackers.
- Sandwich with whole wheat bread or pita and add leafy green lettuce.
- Use whole wheat macaroni to make macaroni and cheese and add peas.
- Use whole wheat spaghetti: add sautéed zucchini and tomatoes to sauce.
- Serve Fresh fruit as a side or salad.
- If it’s pizza night, make your own by using store bought whole wheat crust and adding sauce, a small amount of cheese and load up with vegetables for toppings (green, red, Yellow, or orange peppers, mushrooms, tomatoes, olives, etc.).
- Mexican Night: use whole wheat tortillas, add extra vegetables (tomatoes, lettuce, Olives, etc.) and meat of choice, and try avocados for a topping.
- Prepare any meat, baked, broiled, grilled and serve with brown rice, whole wheat pasta or beans.
- Add a vegetable.

**Snack Ideas**
- Cut up green, red, yellow, or orange peppers, cucumber slices, and split peas and serve with vegetable dip.
- Sliced pears, strawberries, or cubes of melon with fruit dip.
- Piece of celery, 2 tbsp of peanut butter, with small box of raisins.
- Whole grain crackers, if high fat cheeses function as a laxative food, then add to snack.

**Three Meal Rule**
- Ask your dietician if this rule applies to your child.
- Every time food is eaten the body produces a gas reflex, meaning the colon moves.
- To help train the colon, offer 3 meals a day. Try for the same times, same amounts and foods and no snacks between meals.
- Liquids should be between meals only.
Fiber Supplements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Active Ingredients</th>
<th>Serving Size</th>
<th>Amount of Fiber</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metamucil Wafers</td>
<td>Psyllium 50% Soluble</td>
<td>2 wafers</td>
<td>6 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metamucil Powder</td>
<td>Psyllium 65% Soluble</td>
<td>1 tbsp</td>
<td>3 gram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground Flax seed</td>
<td>45% insoluble, 55% soluble</td>
<td>1 tbsp</td>
<td>3 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefiber</td>
<td>Wheat dextrin 100% soluble</td>
<td>2 tsp</td>
<td>3 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citrucil</td>
<td>Methocellulose 100% soluble</td>
<td>1 scoop or 4</td>
<td>2 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>caplets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pectin</td>
<td>100% soluble</td>
<td>1.75oz package</td>
<td>4.3 grams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you have any questions please call Pediatric Surgery at (315) 464-2878.