

## **CONSTIPATION: HOW TO PREVENT & RESOLVE AFTER SURGERY**

*Having regular, soft bowel movements is an important part of everyone's bowel hygiene. Becoming constipated after surgery, especially if you are taking prescription pain medication, is very common and can cause increased pain and discomfort.*

*For Outpatient Procedures:*

- When you return home, after your surgery, begin taking **MiraLAX**.
  - 1 capful every morning in 8 ounces of water.
  - Increase your fluid intake throughout the day (*or it won't work*)
- If you have not had a bowel movement in **2 days after surgery**
  - Continue with the MiraLAX each morning
  - Start taking **Milk of Magnesia** (MOM) every 6 hours until you've had a bowel movement.
  - Continue to increase your fluid intake throughout the day
- If you have not had a bowel movement in **4 days after surgery**
  - Continue with the MiraLAX each morning
  - Stop taking the Milk of Magnesia
  - Start taking **Magnesium Citrate** (*1 bottle*)
    - Drink ½ the bottle, and then 6 hours later drink the other half
  - Continue to increase your fluid intake throughout the day

Call our office with questions or concerns or if you have not had a bowel movement within **4-5 days of surgery. STOP taking these medications if you begin to vomit.**

*This sheet is for relief of **constipation after surgery**. You should NOT be following this protocol on a regular basis. Chronic constipation is a medical condition and an appointment should be made with our office to discuss.*

If you experience occasional constipation as a part of everyday life, please refer to our “**How Fiber Works**” education sheet located on our website – [www.StLouisSurgical.com](http://www.StLouisSurgical.com). Increasing your water intake is ALWAYS a good idea (8 8-oz glasses = 2 liters = ½ gallon per day) and can help significantly with constipation issues. Starting a Probiotic may also be helpful.