

# Preparing for a Cleanout

Many children with chronic constipation require a “**clean out**” followed by **maintenance** therapy. See reverse for your child’s plan.

## What Should I expect?

- Lots of poo! The purpose of the clean out is to clear out the backlog of poo. Your child may poo a large amount all at once, or several small poos.
- More soiling. If your child is experiencing soiling (leaking poo into their pants) this may get worse to start with because old, hard poo will be softened, then come out. Don’t worry, you can expect this to improve after the initial clean out.
- Abdominal discomfort is common. This is because a lot of poo is moving along the bowel. A warm bath or heating pad may help. If your child is especially uncomfortable, please contact your doctor for advice.

## How Can I Get Ready?

- Buy lots of diapers and wipes, or stock up on toilet paper and moist toilet tissue (if your child uses the toilet). Tell family members that the bathroom will be busy.
- Have a heating pad or hot water bottle for your child’s stomach.
- Limit your plans during the first few days. You’ll want to be close to home.
- Get lots of your child’s preferred fluids (Gatorade, juice, etc. – not milk or soda), as well as soups, popsicles, etc.. This is for the medication, but also to keep your child well-hydrated throughout the cleanout.
- Explain to your child that you are helping them to clean out old poo so they will be more comfortable and not have accidents anymore.

## How Long Will This Take?

- The length of time required varies depending on how much stool is in the bowel. It may take a few days, or even a week or two. We suggest families start on Friday afternoon, and plan that your child may still be out of school Monday.
- You will know that your child’s bowel is cleared when the stool coming out looks like brown rusty water or lemonade with small fibrous brown bits. After a full day of lemonade consistency, you can transition from the cleanout protocol to your maintenance plan.

## What Do I Do Next?

- It is extremely important to follow your child’s maintenance plan for **at least 3-6 months** so they are having **one or two soft, full bowel movements every single day**. If they miss many days in the first few months, they may get backed up and require another cleanout. **Do not** change or stop your medication without discussing with your child’s doctor.

# Your Child's Cleanout Program

Medications & Amount:

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Instructions:

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Maintenance Plan:

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Contact with Questions or Concerns:

**We suggest that providers include indicators that the child is fully “cleaned out”  
and ready to taper to maintenance dose**