

The Management of Constipation in Children with CP

		Today's Recommendations
Review of position/seating	e.g., Ensure child is adequately supported in an upright position to allow optimal defecation. Time in a standing table may help with evacuation. If indicated, obtain adapted toilet seat with adequate support.	
Address behavioral issues	Positively reinforce all passage of stool. For children who are toilet trained, ensure adequate time and privacy for defecation (e.g., It isn't going to happen in a public school bathroom stall). Treat accidents with a neutral approach.	
Dietary Alterations	Increase fluid/fiber if possible. Decrease dairy products. If using an enteral formula, consider switching to one with fiber. Refer to a nutritionist as needed.	
Clean-Out Program	Consider several days of enemas to remove all impacted stool (If standard enemas don't work well, consider oil retention enema to soften the impacted stool). Follow by starting on an oral agent to keep stool soft to loose.	
Maintenance Program	Use a bulk agent (e.g. Metamucil or Citrucel) if adequate fluid intake can be ensured. Other options include milk of magnesia, senekot (note: senna can cause abdominal cramping if dosed high), miralax (lately I have found this to work well for many patients who have not had success with other agents), and lactulose. It may take time working with the parent to find an optimal regimen. The need for chronic therapy should be carefully explained.	
Emptying Program	Even when stool is maintained soft, many children with CP may need help with evacuation. Consider using oral senna or suppositories as needed to ensure every other day regular emptying. (Editor's Comment: I have found many parents to like Theravac enemas for this purpose. These are little vials with essentially a liquid suppository which do not require a finger be inserted into the rectum. They can be prescribed with or without lidocaine.")	

Components of table adapted from R. Nickel Community Consultants in the Care of Children with Special Health Care Needs.