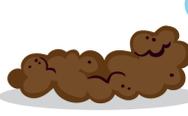
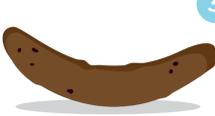
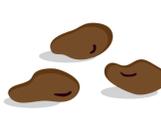
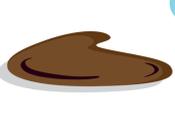


Oh, Poop. Everything you need to know about your #2.

Have you ever wondered why toddlers and kids find all things bathroom-related so fascinating? Well, it just so happens that they are on to something. Our experts in colon and rectal surgery want you to pay attention to your bowel movements. It's actually a great way to keep an eye on your health. Things like texture, color, frequency and smell can all be indicators of possible digestive issues or dietary needs. So the next time you sit down for a #2, pay attention and make your health priority #1.

TEXTURE TALK:

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p>1. </p> <p>Separate, pebble-like pieces that are hard to pass. A sure sign of constipation.</p> | <p>2. </p> <p>Firm, sausage-shaped and lumpy. An indicator that things are getting a little backed up.</p> | <p>3. </p> <p>Soft, smooth and easy to pass—this is your optimum #2!</p> | <p>4. </p> <p>Sausage-shape with visible surface cracks—a respectable #2!</p> |
| <p>5. </p> <p>Soft, formed pieces with defined edges. This is leaning towards diarrhea.</p> | <p>6. </p> <p>Light fluffy pieces with frayed edges and a mushy texture. A definite indicator of diarrhea.</p> | <p>7. </p> <p>No solid pieces at all, thin and runny. Yep—it's diarrhea and we hope you feel better soon!</p> | <p>SOME FACTS</p> |



Poop is made up of mostly water, about 75%! The remaining 25% is a stinky combination of fiber, bacteria, cells and mucous.



Bile is a greenish fluid produced in the liver that aids in the digestion of fat and can alter the color of your poop.



On average it can take 7 seconds for food to travel through the esophagus to the stomach and up 72 hours to travel from the stomach through the intestinal tract.



Frequency varies from person to person and even culture to culture. Anywhere from three times a day to once every three days is normal. As long as you are in that range and feeling comfortable, you're good to go!

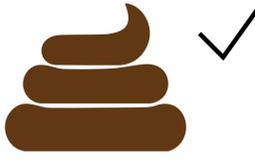
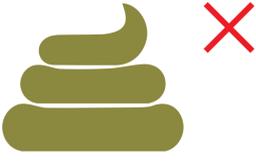
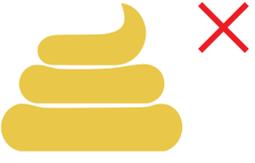
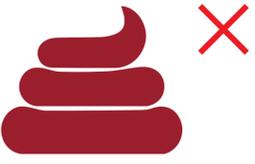


Doctors can now perform stool transplants—taking the stool from a healthy person and transferring it to patients suffering from illnesses such as C. diff colitis. The good bacteria found in healthy poop can fight off serious and potentially life-threatening infections.



You are what you eat and so is your #2. Although food and medications are the primary color contributors, if your #2 has an alarming hue, you may want to call your doctor.

COLOR CONCERNS:

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p></p> <p>BROWN: This is your prime poop pigment. As your food digests, bile and enzymes create the standard brown we all associate with our #2s.</p> | <p></p> <p>GREEN: Too much bile is present. Food may be moving through your body too quickly, not giving bile the time that it needs to break down.</p> | <p></p> <p>YELLOW: Too much fat may be present. Yellow stool may indicate a malabsorption disorder such as celiac disease.</p> |
| <p></p> <p>BLACK: Unless you're eating black licorice, taking iron supplements or other medications, dark black stool could be a sign of upper gastrointestinal bleeding and should be taken seriously.</p> | <p></p> <p>GRAY: Not enough bile is present. Gray or clay colored stool could indicate a bile duct obstruction in the liver.</p> | <p></p> <p>RED: Foods such as beets or red drink mixes can cause bright red stools. If you haven't been consuming these, this could be a sign of lower intestinal tract or rectal bleeding.</p> |



Bleeding is an indicator that something is not quite right. Any persistent bleeding should prompt a visit to your doctor right away.



Remember, if you are concerned about a change in the frequency, color or texture of your #2, call your doctor. Need a doctor? Call 855-UMASS-MD (855-862-7763)



TIPS FOR YOUR TIME ON THE TOILET:

1. Fiber is your friend. A hearty helping of fresh fruits and veggies can help keep your #2s moving right along. Women should aim for 25 grams of fiber per day and men should aim for 38 grams per day.
2. We know it's tempting, but please check your cell phones, tablets and other electronics at the bathroom door. In a recent study, 1 in 6 cell phones was found to be contaminated with fecal matter. Your status post can wait. #yuck
3. While you're at it, keep the books and magazines in the library. Spending too much time on the toilet is not good for blood flow down there. Studies have shown that extra toilet time can lead to, or worsen, hemorrhoids.
4. Know what's normal for you. Don't over analyze every trip to the toilet, but do pay attention to dramatic changes in your bowel movements and call your doctor when you have concerns.
5. If things aren't moving as smoothly as you'd like, consider making some changes to your diet, establish an exercise routine and stay hydrated with plenty of water. These things will help you maintain a happy, healthy digestive tract.

To schedule an appointment, call 855-UMASS-MD (855-862-7763) today!

Sources:

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