

# Qi Gong for Constipation

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We take elimination from our bodies for granted until there's a problem with it. If you've ever experienced constipation, then you know it can become the focus of your entire day. Normal constipation can come from having a hectic schedule, irregular eating habits, medications you're taking, lack of exercise, and stress. Great relief can come from improving all of these factors.

Eating a diet with plenty of whole grains and vegetables goes a long way toward regulating elimination from the body. These foods contain natural fiber that stimulates the colon to cleanse itself. You can substitute some of this whole food fiber with fiber supplements taken with plenty of water, but if you've already tried the supplements and they are not working, you know that it's not the same as whole food fiber. Try oatmeal for breakfast with two tablespoons of ground flaxseed in it. Flaxseed should be protected from exposure to light, kept in the freezer, and not cooked in food, but added right before consuming. You can also add ground flaxseed to any other foods that you eat through the day. I recommend 2-3 tablespoons per day. Start with a small amount and gradually increase the daily amount to help reduce bloating as your body adjusts to the increased fiber.

Another important ingredient for proper elimination is a good balance of calcium and magnesium. Calcium makes muscles contract and magnesium makes them relax. Both are essential to proper muscle movements. You can get these through eating whole foods as well but if you want to take a supplement of these that really seems to help with constipation, I recommend "Cal-Mag Fizz" which is a powder that dissolves completely in water that can be purchased at vitamin and healthfood stores.

It's also a good idea to drink lots of water during the day and avoid foods that dry out the body such as: alcohol, too much coffee, tea, and

hot/spicy foods. Also, eating at regular times in a relaxed environment where you give yourself time to chew and enjoy your food helps to create regular elimination habits. Try getting up a little earlier, eating a fiber rich breakfast, doing some mild exercise, and giving yourself enough time to go to the bathroom before you head out for the day.

A very useful Qi Gong exercise that you can do is from the Spring Four Seasons set. It helps regulate the energy flow through the entire abdomen, helping with problems like constipation and diarrhea as well as stress, depression, anxiety, and feeling emotionally "stuck".

Start with your feet shoulder width apart. Your hands move so that you are holding an imaginary ball in front of you with the left hand on top and the right underneath with the palms facing each other. Then inhale and raise the right hand up, palm up to ceiling and push the left hand down to waist on center line of body, palm down. Feel a good stretch in the ribs on the right and compression in the ribs on the left like you were squeezing out a sponge, relax the wrists. Exhale and inhale again. Exhaling, palms turn to face each other, relax the right arm down and hold the ball again, right hand on top, in front of your stomach. Relax completely. Inhale and raise left hand up to ceiling, push right hand down to waist on center line of body. Feel a stretch in the ribs on left and compression on the right. Exhale and inhale again. Exhaling, palms face each other, relax left arm down and hold a ball, left hand on top, in front of your stomach. Relax. Repeat this exercise as many times in a row as feels good and do it three times or more per day.



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