



PATIENT EDUCATION

Senna (Senokot) for constipation

A plain-language guide for patients and families. Bring this to your visit. It does not replace advice from your clinician.

What this medicine is

Senna (brand example: Senokot) is a stimulant laxative. Each usual adult tablet is 8.6 mg of senna. It helps the bowel squeeze so stool can move. Clinics often teach it for constipation from pain medicine, less movement, or a low-fiber radiation diet.

Clinic teaching dose (confirm with your nurse)

- Starting teaching dose: 2 tablets once daily.
- Your team may increase up to 4 tablets twice daily if that is safe for you.
- Do not raise the dose on your own if you have vomiting, a hard swollen belly, or no gas.

Confirm with your care team. This sheet is clinic teaching, not a prescription and not a dosing authority. Kidney disease, recent abdominal surgery, and bowel obstruction change what is safe. Confirm every dose with your care team.

What you may notice

- A bowel movement in several hours, often overnight
- Cramps if the dose is too high for you
- Darker urine with some senna products. Ask if that worries you



How to take it

- Swallow tablets with a full glass of water unless your team says otherwise.
- Many people take the evening dose so a stool comes in the morning. Follow the clock they wrote.
- Keep drinking fluids and moving if you can. Senna works better with that plan.
- See also the Constipation and Low-fiber diet printouts.

Do not start or increase if

- You are vomiting, have a hard swollen belly, or cannot pass gas
- You have blood in the stool or sudden severe pain
- Your team already told you not to use stimulant laxatives

When to call the clinic

- No stool for three days plus vomiting or a swollen hard belly
- Severe cramping, dizziness, or you cannot keep fluids down
- The written bowel ladder is not working

Questions to ask

- What start dose do you want for me, and what is my maximum?
- Should I pair senna with docusate (Colace) or MiraLAX?
- Is a rectal suppository safe after my pelvic radiation or surgery?

How to schedule or learn more

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