

The importance of poop

In clinic we will spend a good amount of time talking about poop. For some this will be a new experience and is likely to render you sensitive or somewhat uncomfortable, which is perfectly normal. We don't just talk about poop to challenge your sense of comfort around personal bathroom habits though; we talk about it because it's an amazingly powerful way to understand your health puzzle.

What comes out in the toilet bowl tells an awful lot about what is happening in the gut, which speaks volumes for overall health. As a tool or gauge for measuring your state of digestive health and therefore systemic health, your poop has a lot to say.

You may have already undergone scrutiny about the regularity, smell, consistency and sensation of your bowel movements; the Bristol Stool Chart is a universal guide to your poop.

Being 'regular' is what is normal for you – meaning that for some, normal is 2-3 bowel movements per day but for someone else it might be once a day or once every 2 days. Ideally we want to move towards 1-2 bowel motions daily.

Someone with healthy bowel habits is able to:

- Hold on for a short time after you feel the first urge to go to the toilet - this allows time to get there and remove clothing without any accidental loss of faeces
- Pass a bowel motion within about a minute of sitting down on the toilet
- Pass a bowel motion easily and without pain - ideally, you shouldn't be straining on the toilet or struggling to pass a bowel motion which is hard and dry, and
- Completely empty your bowel when you pass a motion - you don't have to go back to the toilet soon after, to pass more.

Keeping an eye on your bathroom habits will offer great insight into the health of your digestive tract and we'd love you to become really familiar with your bowel movements and identifying them so you can become a poop ninja and give us accurate feedback.

We think squatty pottys are a great tool for perfect poop posture...

<http://www.squattypottyaustralia.com>

Bristol Stool Chart

Type 1		Separate hard lumps, like nuts (hard to pass)
Type 2		Sausage-shaped but lumpy
Type 3		Like a sausage but with cracks on the surface
Type 4		Like a sausage or snake, smooth and soft
Type 5		Soft blobs with clear-cut edges
Type 6		Fluffy pieces with ragged edges, a mushy stool
Type 7		Watery, no solid pieces, Entirely Liquid

Our ideal poop is number 4, or verging on 5. It shows that the faeces hasn't stayed in the colon too long as it has a smooth texture. No cracks, bumps or indications of dehydration. Conversely it also hasn't been rapidly evacuated showing us it's been digested well and we're likely to have received appropriate nutrition from our food.

Don't be afraid to have a look in the bowl and become really familiar with your bowel habits – how they look, smell and feel.