

Bowel Management Week - Commonly Asked Questions.

What is Bowel Management Week?

Bowel Management Week at the Colorectal and Pelvic Center at Children's Health is an 8-day outpatient program. The program starts on a Thursday and ends on the next Thursday. It is a program for children born with Anorectal Malformations (imperforate anus, cloaca), Hirschsprung Disease, or pelvic tumors which affect the bowel (such as sacrococcygeal teratomas). It is common for children born with these health issues to have trouble toilet training and to have long-term bowel problems. Children can have severe constipation (hard poop they have trouble passing), poop incontinence (poop they cannot hold in), or frequent diarrhea (loose, watery poop).

What is the goal of Bowel Management Week?

The goal of this program is to find a treatment plan for your child that will help stop poop accidents and control hard or loose poop. The treatment plan may have enemas, medicines, and/or diet changes. We want your child to be able to go to school and other activities without worrying about having accidents and staying clean in their underwear. We hope to make the quality of life for your child and your family better.

What studies and tests will my child need?

- **Contrast Enema** - This is a test which uses x-rays and a special kind of enema liquid to take pictures of your child's tummy so we can see their large bowel (where poop is stored). This will help show if the bowel is larger than normal, moves too slowly, or moves too quickly. All patients will need a contrast enema. The nurse will help you get this scheduled. The study will take 30-45 minutes and must be done the day before your clinic visit unless your child has had one in the past year.
- **KUB (Abdominal x-ray)** – This is a picture of the bowel and inside the tummy. It helps the doctor see how much poop is in the large bowel. We can also see if the fluid from the contrast enema has been completely emptied out of the bowel. **You do not need an appointment for this study**, and it takes about 5 minutes to complete. You will need to plan to have a KUB in the morning before your first meeting with the team, and also on the last 4 days of Bowel Management Week.

What can we expect from the clinic visit?

At your child's first clinic visit, we will talk about your child's health problem and do a physical examination. We will review the studies that were done, tell you the results, and work with you to decide on a treatment plan. You will leave this visit with a treatment plan created just for your child.

What can we expect when we go home?

You will start the bowel management program as prescribed after your first clinic visit. This means you will begin giving medications or enemas at a specific time each day. You will also

- look in the toilet each day to see the size and firmness (liquid, soft, firm) of your child's poop.
- fill out a bowel management diary.
- let the clinic staff know if your child has any symptoms (pain, cramping, upset belly, etc.) and if they are having poop accidents.

This information is all very important.

For the week following your first visit, you will take your child to the Radiology department for daily KUB x-rays no later than 10:00 am on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Someone from the clinic will call you by phone or e-mail you on the days the x-rays are done. We will need to know how the treatment plan is working. We may change the plan based on your report and the result of the x-ray. We ask parents to please be available each morning to give the daily report to our staff and to talk about changes needed to the plan.

What is the success rate?

Studies show children who follow a structured bowel management program can get successful long-term control of severe constipation or poop incontinence. Your child's success with the program relies on following the program exactly as you are told and talking with your care team every day.

When will my child follow up with the clinic?

After Bowel Management Week is completed, we will plan your child's next follow up visit with the Colorectal and Pelvic Center. We can change the care plan during your child's follow up visit or over the phone between visits if needed.

Contact us

Call 214-456-8546 or e-mail colorectal@childrens.com with any questions or concerns you may have. If you are interested in booking an appointment, you can look on our website for available dates or contact us by phone or e-mail.